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"WHEN GOD WORKS WHO CAN HINDER?"

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THE CLAIMS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON ESTABLISHED—IT ALSO  
DEFENDED.

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(Continued from page 120.)

THESE with the following, are the effects that this book was to produce:  
"The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor  
among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible  
one is brought to naught, and the scorner is consumed, and all that  
watch for iniquity are cut off: that make a man an offender for a word,  
and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just  
for a thing of naught. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed  
Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be  
ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth  
his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall  
sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear  
the God of Israel. *They also that erred in spirit shall come to un-  
derstanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.*"  
According to the above, it was to be but a little while after the book  
came forth, before the terrible one [Satan] should be brought to naught.  
He is not yet brought to naught; therefore, the appearing of the book  
was a work of as late a date as the nineteenth century. The house of  
Jacob shall not now be ashamed, or in other words they will be brought  
to a knowledge of the truth, and no more be degraded, cast off, or  
made ashamed, because of their transgressions. This corresponds  
with what Ezekiel says about Israel after the two sticks were to come

together. "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding," &c. Since the appearance of the Book of Mormon many thousands that were blinded by sectarian doctrines, and erred in spirit, have been made to rejoice in God: for they have come to a correct understanding of the principles of righteousness. But says one, what is the use of this book, admitting it is true?—We answer, first, it brings to light an important history before unknown to man; second, it reveals the origin of the American Indians; third, it contains important prophecies, yet to be fulfilled, which immediately concern this generation; fourth, it contains much plainness in regard to points of doctrine, inasmuch that all may understand, and see eye to eye, if they take the pains to read it; fifth, it helps to fill the measure of the knowledge of God, that it may cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Now reader, we have said much about the tribe of Ephraim, and that the Book of Mormon, to use Ezekiel's words, is the "stick of Joseph in the hands of Ephraim;" and it is plain from the prophets that the Lord has chosen the tribes of Ephraim, and Judah, to be instruments in his hands to perform great works. Christ was of Judah, and the apostles were chiefly of the same tribe. They have performed their work, namely, preached the gospel to the nations of the earth, and written much by inspiration;—but God has sent forth some of the writings of the tribe of Ephraim, or Joseph, and he will yet make instruments of them to gather Israel; and help prepare the way for the Millennium: therefore, it is reasonable for us to look for their writings: for, according to Isaiah they were to have an abundance of them; speaking of the Ephraimites, he says: "But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little."—Isa. xxviii. 13. David says by the word of the Lord: "Ephraim is the strength of mine head; Judah is my law giver."—Ps. lx. 7. Moses says: "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together from the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh."—Deut. xxxiii. 17. Now the children of Joseph, or Ephraim never have been the instruments in the hands of God to gather in the people from the ends of the earth; but according to the above they will yet do it. Jeremiah is very plain on this subject: "For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God. For thus saith the Lord, sing with gladness for Jacob, and shout among the chief of the nations: publish ye, praise ye, and say, O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them from the North country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child, and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither. They shall come with weeping, and with suppli-



cations will I lead them: I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, *and Ephraim is my first born*. Hear ye the word of the Lord, O ye nations and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, he that scattereth will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord."—Jer. xxxi. 6-12. First it is said, in the above that the watchmen of Ephraim shall cry to the people, saying, "arise ye let us go up to Zion;" second, it is said that the children of Israel shall be restored; third, when they are restored, Ephraim shall be the Lord's first-born. Ephraim was the second son of Joseph, and Joseph was the eleventh son of Jacob; therefore, this birth has reference to the Ephraimites, first of all the tribes receiving the gospel—being born of God. Therefore, it is perfectly consistent with reason, for their writings to come forth to assist in this work of gathering.

Jeremiah connects the following with this work: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah;" "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. xxxi. 31-34. Isaiah speaking of their restoration, and the everlasting covenant that the Lord will make with them, says: "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people."—Isa. lxi. 9. Now we ask, can any one tell whether the American Indians are of Israel unless by revelation from God? This was a hidden mystery, which was necessary to be revealed in time for their gathering.—But enough is already said upon this part of the subject.—There is an abundance of collateral evidence in favour of this work, such, as the predictions of the prophets concerning the *ensign* that God will rear for the gathering of Israel; "setting his hand the second time to recover them," &c., which we shall hereafter notice under another head.

We will also for the satisfaction of the reader give a brief history, as recorded in the Book of Mormon, of the ancients in America—How they came here—Their prosperity—Some of their teachings—Some of their prophecies, and their fulfilment—Their destruction—The depositing of their records—The manner in which the Book of Mormon was discovered and brought to light—The testimony of several who testify to its truth—O. Cowdery's Letters, embracing the life and character of Joseph Smith, and some of the most important incidents connected with the establishment of the work of God in this our day and age of the world, &c., &c.

## HISTORY OF THE ANCIENTS OF AMERICA, AND ALSO OF THE BOOK OF MORMON.

Six hundred years B. C., according to the Book of Mormon, Lehi, who was a righteous man, was fore-warned of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonish captivity, who was commanded by the Lord, took his family and fled into the wilderness. He pitched his tent in the wilderness near the Red Sea, and sent back his sons to Jerusalem, who persuaded one Ishmael and his family to accompany them to their father Lehi. The Lord promised to lead them to a choice land above all lands; therefore they set out on their journey for this land. After a long and tedious journey, they came to the great waters, or the Ocean. Nephi the son of Lehi, who was also a prophet, and their pilot, or leader in the wilderness; was commanded and instructed to build a ship sufficiently large to transport them over the sea. This work was accomplished in eight years from the time they left Jerusalem. They set sail, and in a proper time they landed, as we infer from their record, somewhere on the Western coast of South America. They immediately commenced tilling the earth, and erecting mansions for dwelling places.

Lehi had six sons, Laman, Lemuel, Nephi, Sam, Jacob, and Joseph. Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael rebelled against God, and would not keep his commandments: for this they were cursed. Their posterity in process of time became a powerful nation; but extremely wicked, and their chief occupations were hunting, plundering, and roving about from place to place. In the Book of Mormon they are called Lamanites. The other sons of Lehi were obedient to the commands of God. Their posterity also in the course of time became a great nation, and were called Nephites. To them God committed his divine oracles, (the holy priesthood) and they had prophets and inspired men among them. They also kept a record of their prophecies, and revelations, and the proceedings of their nation. When they left Jerusalem they brought with them the law of Moses, and the writings of the former prophets, down to the days of Jeremiah. This accounts for the quotations from Isaiah and others, which are found in the Book of Mormon.

The Nephites tilled the land, built cities, and erected temples for places of worship; but the Lamanites lived a more indolent life; although, in some instances they built cities. The Nephites were at times faithful to God, at other times they were indifferent, and would not be faithful. They frequently had long and tedious wars with the Lamanites, and were often driven before them. They were constantly emigrating to the North. At length they commenced settlements in the region of country, not far from the Isthmus of Darien, and while in those parts they advanced farther in science and arts, than

at any time previous; and built more spacious cities, and buildings than they did before.

Six hundred and thirty odd years from the time Lehi left Jerusalem, Christ, after his resurrection, appeared unto many of the Nephites and established his church, chose disciples and sent them throughout the land to preach his gospel, thus fulfilling the saying: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold them I must go and bring also."

Individuals of the Lamanites at times were obedient to the faith. The Nephites after Christ's appearance were faithful for many years; but in the third or fourth century iniquity began to abound, and their love began to wax cold. Some dissented and raised up churches for the sake of gain; and thus they were troubled with the spirit of pride and haughtiness. God commanded Mormon, who lived in the fourth century, to preach repentance to them, and foretell their destruction if they would not repent. The Lord foreseeing that they would not repent, commanded Mormon to collect the writings of his forefathers—their revelations and prophecies, &c., and make an abridgement of them, and engrave them upon new plates, (their manner of keeping records was to engrave them on metallic plates.) But in consequence of their wars, and their flight to the North, to escape the Lamanites, he did not live to finish this work; and when the final destruction of the Nephites drew near, he gave the records to his son Moroni, who lived to see their final extermination, or destruction by the hands of the Lamanites, and they with his father left to moulder on the plain.

Thus a powerful nation, whose fathers were the favourites of heaven, were cut off, and their names have faded into oblivion. Oh! sin thou foul monster! Thou art terrible, thy ways are death! why didst thou cause such a nation to be blotted out of the earth?

The Indians of America are the descendants of the Lamanites, and according to predictions that are in the Book of Mormon, they will yet lay down their weapons of war and be converted unto the Lord.

Moroni finished compiling and abridging the records of his fathers, which he engraved upon new plates, for that purpose, to use his own words, as follows: "And now behold, we have written this record according to our knowledge in the characters, which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech. And if our plates had been sufficiently large, we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record. But the Lord knoweth the things which we have written, and also that none other people knoweth our language, therefore he hath prepared means for the interpretation thereof."

He also engraved on them an account, called the "Book of Ether," of a people who left the Old world, and came to this continent, at the time the language was confounded at Babel; which was a partial fulfil-



ment of the saying: "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth."—Gen. xi. 8. If any person should wish to learn further concerning this people, let him read the Book of Mormon.

Moroni was then commanded to deposite this record in the earth, together with the *Urim and Thummim*, or as the Nephites would have said, *Interpreters*, which were instruments to assist in the work of the translation, with a promise from the Lord that it should be brought to light by means of a Gentile Nation that should possess the land; and be published to the world, and go forth to the Lamanites, and be one of the instruments in the hands of God for their conversion. It remained safe in the place where it was deposited, till it was brought to light by the administration of angels, and translated by the gift, and power of God. But says one, who ever heard of such a thing as a record being deposited in the earth? We answer: that it is nothing more strange than it was for Jeremiah to hide the *tabernacle*, and the *ark of the covenant*, which contained the tables of stone, written upon by the finger of God, Aaron's rod, and the pot of manna, in mount Nebo. This account is to be found in the Apocrypha of the Old Testament; 2nd Book of Maccabees, ii chapter. But says the objector, perhaps the account is not true? We answer: that history corroborates it. This record was not designed to be a source of wealth, or wordly profit to any one; but to be deposited again, because they were sacred, as much so, as the tables of stone, on which the ten commandments were written. However, they were shown to chosen witnesses, men of undoubted veracity, who testify that they saw it, and know by the voice of an angel that it is the work of God. But says the objector, again, why was it not shown to the world, and then there would have been no doubt about this matter? We answer: first, because God commanded otherwise, which is the best of all reasons; second, the same may be said about the tables of stone; why did not Moses show them to all the children of Israel? We have no account of his showing them to but a few; but on the contrary, they were placed in the *Holy of Holy* where the High-priest was only allowed to enter once a year. Third, why did not Christ show himself to the Jews after his resurrection, and thus convince them that he was the true Messiah? Peter said: "Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly: not to all the people, but unto witnesses, chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead."—Acts, x. 40, 41. Thus the world had to believe the resurrection of Christ from the testimony of interested witnesses, and not from disinterested. What men often think to be the best way, God generally looks upon as foolishness. We will here insert the testimony of three witnesses, which is appended to the Book of Mormon; page 572, third edition. "Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God, the

Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety, that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true; and it is marvelous in our eyes, nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honour be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

"OLIVER COWDERY,

"DAVID WHITMER,

"MARTIN HARRIS."

Now reader the above is as positive a testimony as there ever was concerning any truth that God ever revealed since the world began, and the knowledge that enabled them to testify, professes to have come from heaven: therefore, if it is deception, there is no other way to find it out, but to receive intelligence from whence it professes to have come. It is affirmed to be true, from the testimony of an angel, and a million negatives will not make it false, or effect its truth in the least. There was a few individuals that testified to the resurrection of Christ from an actual knowledge—they had seen him; but there were many nations that denied, and said, he had not risen from the dead; but what did it all amount to? He came from heaven, and the only way for them to know whether he did or not, was to get a revelation. Noah testified of the flood, and for all that we know, all the Antediluvians took the negative side of the question; but what did it all amount to? Noah obtained his knowledge from heaven, and condemned the whole world by his testimony; and yet they had as many reasons for rejecting him, as the people have for rejecting the Book of Mormon. Noah alone testified of the flood; but there are thousands that can testify that the Book of Mormon is true. If the Book of Mormon is the work of wicked men, it cannot be found out in any other way but by revelation; therefore, those who oppose it, that have received no revelation, do not know whether they are fighting against God, or the Devil. Thus the Book of Mormon is

supported by that kind of evidence, that all the divines, priests, and professors, cannot overthrow it. It bears its own weight: for it is true, and none can make it false. Indeed, if there was no other evidence in favour of it, but the testimony of the three witnesses which we have inserted, we should consider ourselves under obligation to believe it, until a testimony is received from heaven to over-balance that which is in favour, which professes to have come from heaven. Others may think as they please. But says one, the characters of some of the founders of the sect are such that we have reason to believe that it is all a fabrication. We know of nothing that is derogatory to their characters, but the foul misrepresentations of priests, professors, and editors. The professors of religion circulated falsehoods about Christ, and the apostles; but all did not make Christ a false prophet. A thousand falsehoods are in circulation about the Book of Mormon, and those who were the instruments in the hands of God to bring about this work: and what do they all prove? If they prove any thing, they prove that they are men of God, and that the Book of Mormon is true. Christ said: "Blessed are ye when they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake." "Woe be unto you when all men shall speak well of you." "If they have hated me they will hate you." Again, why were not these things revealed to some of the learned divines, instead of Joseph Smith? Answer: why did not Christ choose for his apostles some of the High-priests of the Pharisees, or some of the doctors of the law, instead of fishermen. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise."

There is also the testimony of eight other witnesses, who testify that they saw this record. Their testimony is to be found on the last page of the Book of Mormon.—We will now extract a few prophecies from the Book of Mormon.

Nephi prophecying of this our day, page 113, says:

"O ye Gentiles, have ye remembered the Jews, mine ancient covenant people? nay: but ye have cursed them, and have hated them, and have not sought to recover them. But behold, I will return all these things upon your own heads; for I the Lord, hath not forgotten my people. Thou fool, that shall say, a bible, we have got a bible, and we need no more bible. Have ye obtained a bible, save it were by the Jews? Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth? Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation



like unto another. And when two nations shall run together, the testimony of the two nations shall run together also. (There are many of the House of Israel that do not believe that Christ is the true Messiah; and also many heathen nations; but when the Book of Mormon is presented unto them, they will discover that it is the testimony of another nation that was secluded from those of the Eastern continent, and without communication with each other, in those early times; but it agrees with the bible. The one, was written upon this continent, the other upon the Eastern; therefore when the servants of God shall preach the gospel to the nations of the earth, and to the House of Israel, they will have the testimony of two nations to present unto them, that have run together, both affirming Christ to be the Son of God. This will be a testimony that will not be easily dispensed with; consequently they will search deep into the matter, and peradventure learn that Jesus is the true Messiah. Hence we see the utility of the Book of Mormon—for it is a testimony of a nation that was secluded from the Old world. "By the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word shall be established.") And I do this that I may prove unto many, that I am the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and that I speak forth my words according to mine own pleasure. And because that I have spoken one word, ye need not suppose that I cannot speak another; for my work is not yet finished; neither shall it be, until the end of man; neither from that time henceforth and forever.

"Wherefore, because that ye have a bible, ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written: for I command all men, both in the east, and in the west, and in the north, and in the south, and in the islands of the sea, that they shall write the words which I speak unto them; for out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works, according to that which is written. For behold I shall speak unto the Jews, and they shall write it: and I shall also speak unto the Nephites, and they shall write it; And I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the House of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth, and they shall write it.

"And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews: and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel: and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews.

"And it shall come to pass that my people which are of the House of Israel, shall be gathered home unto the lands of their possessions; and my word also shall be gathered in one. And I will shew unto them that fight against my word and against my people, who are of the House of Israel, that I am God, and that I covenanted with Abraham, that I would remember his seed forever.

"And now, behold, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you: for I, Nephi, would not suffer that ye should suppose that ye are more righteous than the Gentiles shall be. For behold, except ye shall keep the commandments of God ye shall all likewise perish; and because of the words which have been spoken ye need not suppose that the Gentiles are utterly destroyed. For behold I say unto you, that as many of the Gentiles as will repent, are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent, shall be cast off; for the Lord covenanteth with none, save it be with them that repent and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel.

"And now, I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles. For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed. (When the Book of Mormon was first published to the world there were but a very few that believed it; but since that time it has gained thousands of believers, whether this prophecy was written by the inspiration of God, or not.) And then shall the remnant of our seed (the aborigines of this continent, or the Red men of the forest,) know concerning us, how that we came out from Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews. And the gospel of Jesus Christ shall be declared among them; wherefore, they shall be restored unto the knowledge of their fathers, and also to the knowledge of Jesus Christ which was had among their fathers. And then shall they rejoice; for they shall know that it is a blessing unto them from the hand of God: and their scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes: and many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a pure and a delightsome people.

"And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered, also shall begin to believe in Christ: and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; [Canaan] and as many as shall believe in Christ, shall also become a delightsome people. (At the time the Book of Mormon was brought to light, the land of Canaan was in the hands of the Turks, who rigidly held possession of it, and would not allow the Jews the ordinary privileges of other citizens; but since that time there has been a great change in the Ottoman Empire, which now affords the Jews more liberty; and also the privilege to gather upon the land of their fathers.—Thy have commenced gathering there by thousands, and are making preparations to build again the city of Jerusalem. Thus the above prophecy is fulfilling, and if it was not written by inspiration, we must admit at any rate, that the one who wrote it, was good at guessing.)

"And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth. And with righteousness shall the Lord God judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth. And he shall smite the

earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked; for the time speedily cometh, that the Lord God shall cause a great division among the people; and the wicked will he destroy; and he will spare his people, yea, even if it so be that he must destroy the wicked by fire. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. And then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fating, together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. Wherefore, the things of all nations shall be made known: yea, all things shall be made known unto the children of men. There is nothing which is secret, save it shall be revealed; there is no works of darkness, save it shall be made manifest in the light; and there is nothing which is sealed upon the earth, save it shall be loosed. Wherefore, all things which have been revealed unto the children of men, shall at that day be revealed; and satan shall have power over the hearts of the children of men no more, for a long time. And now my beloved brethren, I make an end of my sayings."

Moroni prophecied of this our day, and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and the situation of this generation, as follows. Book of Mormon, page 517.

"Behold, I am Moroni; and were it possible, I would make all things known unto you. Behold, I make an end of speaking concerning this people. I am the son of Mormon, and my father was a descendant of Nephi; and I am the same who hideth up this record unto the Lord; the plates thereof are of no worth, because of the commandment of the Lord. For he truly saith, that no one shall have them to get gain; but the record thereof is of great worth; and whoso shall bring it to light, him will the Lord bless. For none can have power to bring it to light, save it be given him of God; for God will that it shall be done with an eye single to his glory, or the welfare of the ancient and long dispersed covenant people of the Lord. \* \* \*. And no one need say, they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord hath spoken it; for out of the earth shall they come, by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it; and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away; and it shall come even as if one should speak from the dead. And it shall come in a day when the blood of saints shall cry unto the Lord, because of secret combinations and the works of darkness; (Reader, just remember the persecutions that have come upon the saints in the State of Missouri, and the many that have sealed their testimony with their own blood,) yea, it shall come in a day when



the power of God shall be denied, and churches become defiled, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts; yea, even in a day when leaders of churches, and teachers, in the pride of their hearts, even to the envying of them who belong to their churches; yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be heard of fires, and tempests, and vapors of smoke in foreign lands; and there shall also be heard of wars, and rumours of wars, and earthquakes in divers places; yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be great pollutions upon the face of the earth; there shall be murders and robbing, and lying, and deceivings, and whoredoms, and all manner of abominations, when there shall be many who will say, do this or do that, and it mattereth not, for the Lord will uphold such at the last day. But wo unto such, for they are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity. Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be churches built up that shall say, come unto me, and for your money you shall be forgiven of your sins. O ye wicked and perverse, and stiff-necked people, why have ye built up churches unto yourselves to get gain? Why have ye transfigured the holy word of God, that ye might bring damnation upon your souls? Behold, look ye unto the revelations of God. For behold, the time cometh at that day when all these things must be fulfilled. Behold, the Lord hath shewn unto me great and marvelous things concerning that which must shortly come at that day when these things shall come forth among you. Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shewn you unto me, and I know your doing; and I know that ye do walk in the pride of your hearts; and there are none, save a few only, who do not lift themselves up in the pride of their hearts, unto the wearing of very fine apparel, unto envying, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities: and your churches, yea, even every one, have become polluted because of the pride of your hearts. For behold, ye do love money, and your substances, and your fine apparel, and the adorning of your churches, more than ye love the poor and the needy, the sick and the afflicted. O ye polluted ones, ye hypocrites, ye teachers, who sell yourselves for that which will canker, why have ye polluted the holy church of God? Why are ye ashamed to take upon ye the name of Christ? Why do you not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness, than that misery which never dies, because of the praise of the world, Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick, and the afflicted, to pass by you, and notice them not? Yea, why do ye build up your secret abominations to get gain, and cause that widows should mourn before the Lord, and also orphans to mourn before the Lord; and also the blood of their fathers and their husbands to cry unto the Lord from the ground, for vengeance upon your heads? Behold the sword of vengeance hangeth over you; and the time soon cometh that he will smite the blood of the saints upon you, for he will not suffer their cries any longer."

The following are samples of the pureness of the doctrine taught in the Book of Mormon. Nephi instructs his brethren as follows, page 116.

SECOND BOOK OF NEPHI.—CHAPTER XIII.

"And now I, Nephi, make an end of my prophesying unto you, my beloved brethren. And I cannot write but a few things, which I know must surely come to pass; neither can I write but a few of the words of my brother Jacob. Wherefore the things which I have written, sufficeth me, save it be a few words which I must speak, concerning the doctrine of Christ; wherefore, I shall speak unto you plainly, according to the plainness of my prophesying. For my soul delighteth in plainness: for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men. For the Lord God giveth light unto the understanding: for he speaketh unto men according to their language, unto their understanding. Wherefore, I would that ye should remember that I have spoken unto you, concerning that prophet which the Lord showed unto me, that should baptize the Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world.

"And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water. And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfil all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he sheweth unto the children of men, that according to the flesh, he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments; wherefore, after he was baptized with water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. And again: It sheweth unto the children of men the straightness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them. And he said unto the children of men, follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus, save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father? And the Father said, repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my beloved Son. And also, the voice of the Son came unto me saying, he that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me: wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism; yea, by following your Lord and your Saviour down into the water, according to his word; behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.

"But behold, my beloved brethren, thus came the voice of the Son unto me, saying, after ye have repented of your sins, and witnessed unto the Father that ye are willing to keep my commandments, by the baptism of water, and have received the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, and can speak with a new tongue, yea, even with the tongue of angels, and after this, should deny me, it would have been better for you, that ye had not known me.

"And I heard a voice from the Father, saying, yea, the words of my beloved, are true and faithful. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.—And now, my beloved brethren, I know by this, that unless a man shall endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God, he cannot be saved; wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen, that your Lord and your Redeemer should do: for, for this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter. For the gate by which ye should enter, is repentance, and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire, and by the Holy Ghost. And then are ye in this straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate: ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son; and ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye entered in by the way, ye should receive.

"And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this straight and narrow path, I would ask, if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, nay; for ye have not come thus far, save it were by the word of Christ, with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of Him who is mighty to save; wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: ye shall have eternal life.

"And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which one is God, without end. Amen.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

"And now, behold, my beloved brethren, I suppose that ye ponder somewhat in your hearts, concerning that which ye should do, after ye have entered in by the way. But behold, why do ye ponder these things in your hearts? Do ye not remember that I said unto you, that after ye had received the Holy Ghost, ye could speak with the tongue of angels? And now, how could ye speak with the tongue of angels, save it were by the Holy Ghost? Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ: for



behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.—Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them, it will be because ye ask not neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark. For behold, again I say unto you, that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will shew unto you all things what ye should do. Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ; and there will be no more doctrine given, until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh. And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you, shall ye observe to do.

“And now I, Nephi, cannot say more: the spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiff-neckedness of men: for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be.

“And now my beloved brethren, I perceive that ye ponder still in your hearts; and it grieveth me that I must speak concerning this thing. For if ye would hearken unto the spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray: for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray. But behold, I say unto you, that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform any thing unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.”

The following are some of the instructions that Christ gave to his people upon this land, page, 492.

“And it came to pass that as the disciples of Jesus were journeying and were preaching the things which they had both heard and seen, and were baptizing in the name of Jesus, it came to pass that the disciples were gathered together, and were united in mighty prayer and fasting. And Jesus again shewed himself unto them, for they were praying unto the Father, in his name; and Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, what will ye that I shall give unto you; and they said unto him, Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this church; for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter. And the Lord said unto them, verily, verily I say unto you, why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing? have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? for by this name shall ye be called at the last day; and whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day; therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name, that he will bless the church for my sake; and how be it my

church, save it be called in my name? for if a church be called in Moses' name, then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man, then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name, then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel. Verily, I say unto you, that ye are built upon my gospel; therefore ye shall call whatsoever things ye do call in my name; therefore if ye call upon the Father, for the church, if it be in my name, the Father will hear you; and if it so be that the church is built upon my gospel, then will the Father shew forth his own works in it; but if it be not built upon my gospel, and is built upon the works of men, or upon the works of the devil, verily I say unto you, they have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence there is no return; for their works do follow them, for it is because of their works that they are hewn down; therefore remember the things that I have told you. Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you, that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me; and my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, I might draw all men unto me; that as I have been lifted up by men, even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil; and for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father, I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works. And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name, shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father, at that day when I shall stand to judge the world. And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father; and this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words; and no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest, save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end. Now this is the commandment, repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day. Verily, verily I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do, that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do, even that shall ye do; therefore if ye do these things, blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day.

The following Letters of Oliver Cowdery were first published in the "Messenger and Advocate," in Kirtland, Ohio, A. D. 1834-5. Believing they will be read with great interest, and satisfactorily received by all our patrons; therefore, we cheerfully insert them in the "Gospel Reflector." Indeed, the particularities, and important incidents, connected with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, have ever been, and are now, a subject of inquiry. The following Letters contain all the information necessary upon that subject.

N. B. They were written to W. W. Phelps, who wrote answers to them; but we shall not publish them: for he was also a member of the society; and his letters were generally brief—questions upon the above subject. This will account for the style in which the following are written.

## O. COWDERY'S LETTERS TO W. W. PHELPS.

## LETTER I.

*Norton, Medina co., Ohio, Sabbath evening, September 7, 1834.*

DEAR BROTHER,—

Before leaving home, I promised, if I tarried long, to write; and while a few moments are now allowed me for reflection, aside from the cares and common conversation of my friends in this place, I have thought that were I to communicate them to you, might, perhaps, if they should not prove *especially* beneficial to yourself, by confirming you in the faith of the gospel, at least be interesting, since it has pleased our heavenly Father to call us both to rejoice in the same hope of eternal life. And by giving them publicity, some thousands who have embraced the same covenant, may learn something more particular upon the rise of this church, in this last time. And while the gray evening is fast changing into a settled darkness, my heart responds with the happy millions who are in the presence of the Lamb, and are past the power of temptation, in rendering thanks, though feebly, to the same Parent.

Another day has passed, into that, to us, boundless ocean, ~~tranquility~~ where nearly six thousand years have gone before; and what flits across the mind like an electric shock is, that it will never return! Whether it has been well improved or not; whether the principles emanating from him who "hallowed" it, have been observed; or whether, like the common mass of time, it has been heedlessly spent, is not for me to say—one thing I can say—It can never be recalled!—it has rolled in to assist in filling up the grand space decreed in the mind of its Author, till nature shall have ceased her work, and ~~time~~ its accustomed revolutions—when its Lord shall have completed the gathering of his elect, and with them enjoy that Sabbath which shall never end!



On Friday, the 5th, in company with our brother JOSEPH SMITH, jr., I left Kirtland for this place (New Portage,) to attend the conference previously appointed. To be permitted, once more, to travel with this brother, occasions reflections of no ordinary kind. Many have been the fatigues and privations which have fallen to my lot to endure, for the gospel's sake, since 1828, with this brother. Our road has frequently been spread with the "fowler's snare," and our persons sought with the eagerness, of the Savage's ferocity, for innocent blood, by men, either heated to desperation by the insinuations of those who professed to be "guides and way-marks" to the kingdom of glory, or the individuals themselves!—This, I confess, is a dark picture to spread before our patrons, but they will pardon my plainness when I assure them of the truth. In fact, God has so ordered, that the reflections which I am permitted to cast upon my past life, relative to a knowledge of the way of salvation, are rendered "doubly endearing." Not only have I been graciously preserved from wicked and unreasonable men, with this our brother, but I have seen the fruit of perseverance in proclaiming the everlasting gospel, immediately after it was declared to the world in these last days, in a manner not to be forgotten while heaven gives me common intellect. And what serves to render the reflection past expression on this point is, that from *his* hand I received baptism, by the direction of the angel of God—the first received into this church, in this day.

Near this time of the setting of the Sun, Sabbath evening, April 5th, 1830, my natural eyes, for the first time beheld this brother. He then resided in Harmony, Susquehanna county, Penn. On Monday the 6th, I assisted him in arranging some business of a temporal nature, and on Tuesday the 7th, commenced to write the book of Mormon. These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the *inspiration* of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated, with the *Urim* and *Thummim*, or, as the Nephites would have said, "Interpreters," the history, or record, called "The book of Mormon."

To notice, in even few words, the interesting account given by Mormon, and his faithful son Moroni, of a people once beloved and favored of heaven, would supercede my present design: I shall therefore defer this to a future period, and as I said in the introduction, pass more directly to some few incidents immediately connected with the rise of this church, which may be entertaining to some thousands who have stepped forward, amid the frowns of bigots and the calumny of hypocrites, and embraced the gospel of Christ.

No men in their sober senses, could translate and write the directions given to the Nephites, from the mouth of the Saviour, of the precise manner in which men should build up his church, and especially, when corruption had spread an uncertainty over all forms and systems practised among men, without desiring a privilege of showing the

willingness of the heart by being buried in the liquid grave, to answer a "good conscience by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

After writing the account given of the Saviour's ministry to the remnant of the seed of Jacob, upon this continent, it was easily to be seen, as the prophet said would be, that darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. On reflecting further, it was as easily to be seen, that amid the great strife and noise concerning religion, none had authority from God to administer the ordinances of the gospel. For, the question might be asked, have men authority to administer in the name of Christ, who deny revelations? when his testimony is no less than the spirit of prophecy? and his religion based, built, and sustained by immediate revelations in all ages of the world, when he has had a people on earth? If these facts were buried, and carefully concealed by men whose craft would have been in danger, if once permitted to shine in the faces of men, they were no longer to us; and we only waited for the commandment to be given, "Arise and be baptised."

This was not long desired before it was realized. The Lord, who is rich in mercy, and ever willing to answer the consistent prayer of the humble, after we had called upon him in a fervent manner, aside from the abodes of men, condescended to manifest to us his will. On a sudden, as from the midst of eternity, the voice of the Redeemer spake peace to us, while the vail was parted and the angel of God came down clothed with glory, and delivered the anxiously looked for message, and the keys of the gospel of repentance! What joy! what wonder! what amazement! While the world were racked and distracted—while millions were groping as the blind for the wall, and while all men were resting upon uncertainty, as a general mass, our eyes beheld—our ears heard. As in the "blaze of day;" yes, more—above the glitter of the May Sun beam, which then shed its brilliancy over the face of nature! Then his voice, though mild, pierced to the center, and his words, "I am thy fellow-servant," dispelled every fear. We listened—we gazed—we admired! 'Twas the voice of the angel from glory—'twas a message from the Most High! and as we heard we rejoiced, while his love enkindled upon our souls, and we were rapt in the vision of the Almighty! Where was room for doubt? No where: uncertainty had fled, doubt had sunk, no more to rise, while fiction and deception had fled forever!

But, dear brother think further, think for a moment, what joy filled our hearts and with what surprise we must have bowed, (for who would not have bowed the knee for such a blessing?) when we received under his hand the holy priesthood, as he said, "upon you my fellow-servants, in the name of Messiah I confer this priesthood and this authority, which shall remain upon earth, that the sons of Levi may yet offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness!"

I shall not attempt to paint to you the feelings of this heart, nor the majestic beauty and glory which surrounded us on this occasion; but you will believe me when I say, that earth, nor men, with the eloquence

of time, cannot begin to clothe language in as interesting and sublime a manner as this holy personage. No; nor has this earth power to give the joy, to bestow the peace, or comprehend the wisdom which was contained in each sentence as they were delivered by the power of the Holy Spirit! Man may deceive his fellow man; deception may follow deception, and the children of the wicked one may have power to seduce the foolish and untaught, till naught but fiction feeds the many, and the fruit of falsehood carries in its current the giddy to the grave; but one touch with the finger of his love, yes, one ray of glory from the upper world, or one word from the mouth of the Saviour, from the bosom of eternity, strikes it *all* into insignificance, and blots it forever from the mind! The assurance that we were in the presence of an angel; the certainty that we heard the voice of Jesus, and the truth unsullied as it flowed from a pure personage, dictated by the will of God, is to me, past description, and I shall ever look upon this expression of the Saviour's goodness with wonder and thanksgiving while I am permitted to tarry, and in those mansions where perfection dwells and sin never comes, I hope to adore in that DAY which shall never cease!\*

I must close for the present: my candle is quite extinguished, and all nature seems locked in silence, shrouded in darkness, and enjoying that repose so necessary to this life. But the period is rolling on when *night* will close, and those who are found worthy will inherit that city where neither the light of the sun nor moon will be necessary! "for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb will be the light thereof."

#### LETTER II.

DEAR BROTHER,—

In the last Messenger and Advocate I promised to commence a more particular or minute history of the rise and progress of the church of the Latter-Day Saints; and publish, for the benefit of inquirers, and all who are disposed to learn. There are certain facts relative to the works of God worthy the consideration and observance of every individual, and every society:—They are that he never works in the dark—his works are always performed in a clear, intelligible manner: and another point is, that he never works in vain. This is not the case with men; but might it not be? When the Lord works, he accomplishes his purposes, and the effects of his power are to be seen afterward. In view of this, suffer me to make a few remarks by way of introduction. The works of man may shine for a season with a degree of brilliancy, but time changes their complexion; and whether it did or not, all would be the same in a little space, as nothing except that which was erected by a hand which never grows weak, can remain when corruption is consumed.

\* I will hereafter give you a full history of the rise of this church, up to the time stated in my introduction; which will necessarily embrace the life and character of this brother. I shall therefore leave the history of baptism, &c. till its proper place.



I shall not be required to adorn and beautify my narrative with a relation of the faith of Enoch, and those who assisted him to build up Zion, which fled to God—on the mountains of which was commanded the blessing, life forever more—to be held in reserve to add another ray of glory to the grand retinue, when worlds shall rock from their base to their centre; the nations of the righteous rise from the dust, and the blessed millions of the church of the first born, shout his triumphant coming, to receive his kingdom, over which he is to reign till all enemies are subdued.

Nor shall I write the history of the Lord's church, raised up according to his own instruction to Moses and Aaron; of the perplexities and discouragements which came upon Israel for their transgressions; their organization upon the land of Canaan, and their overthrow and dispersion among all nations, to reap the reward of their iniquities, to the appearing of the Great Shepherd, in the flesh.

But there is, of necessity, a uniformity so exact; a manner so precise, and ordinances so minute, in all ages and generations when ever God has established his church among men, that should I have occasion to recur to either age, and particularly to that characterized by the advent of the Messiah, and the ministry of the apostles of that church; with a cursory view of the same till it lost its visibility on earth; was driven into darkness, or till God took the holy priesthood unto himself, where it has been held in reserve to the present century, as a matter of right, in this free country, I may take the privilege. This may be doubted by some—indeed by many—as an admission of this point would overthrow the popular systems of the day. I cannot reasonably expect, then, that the large majority of professors will be willing to listen to my argument for a moment, as a careful, impartial, and faithful investigation of the doctrines which I believe to be correct, and the principles cherished in my bosom—and believed by this church—by every honest man must be admitted as truth. Of this I may say as Tertullian said to the Emperor when writing in defence of the saints in his day: "Whoever looked well into our religion that did not embrace it?"

Common undertakings and plans of men may be overthrown or destroyed by opposition. The systems of this world may be exploded or annihilated by oppression or falsehood; but it is the reverse with pure religion. There is a power attendant on truth that all the arts and designs of men cannot fathom; there is an increasing influence which rises up in one place the moment it is covered in another, and the more it is traduced, and the harsher the means employed to affect its extinction, the more numerous are its votaries. It is not the vain cry of "delusion" from the giddy multitude; it is not the sneers of bigots; it is not the frowns of zealots, neither the rage of princes, kings, nor emperors, that can prevent its influence. The fact is, as Tertullian said, no man ever looked carefully into its consistency and propriety without embracing it. It is impossible;

that light which enlightens man, is at once enraptured; that intelligence which existed before the world was, will unite, and that wisdom in the Divine economy will be so conspicuous, that it will be embraced, it will be observed, and it must be obeyed!

Look at pure religion whenever it has had a place on earth, and you will always mark the same characteristics in all its features. Look at truth (without which the former could not exist,) and the same peculiarities are apparent. Those who have been guided by them have always shown the same principles; and those who were not, have as uniformly sought to destroy their influence. Religion has had its friends and its enemies; its advocates and its opponents. But the thousands of years which have come and gone, have left it unaltered; the millions who have embraced it, and are now enjoying that bliss held forth in its promises, have left its principles unchanged, and its influence upon the honest heart, unweakened. The many oppositions which have encountered it; the millions of calumnies, the numberless reproaches, and the myriads of falsehoods, have left its fair from unimpaired, its beauty untarnished, and its excellence as excellent; while its certainty is the same, and its foundation upheld by the hand of God!

One peculiarity of men I wish to notice in the early part of my narrative.—So far as my acquaintance and knowledge of men and their history extends, it has been the custom of every generation, to boast of, or extol the acts of the former. In this respect I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I mean the righteous—those to whom God communicated his will. There has ever been an apparent blindness common to men, which has hindered their discovering the real worth and excellence of individuals while residing with them; but when once deprived of their society, worth, and counsel, they were ready to exclaim, “how great and intestible were their qualities, and how precious is their memory.”

The vilest and most corrupt are not exempted from this charge: even the Jews, whose former principles had become degenerated, and whose religion was a mere show, were found among that class who were ready to build and garnish the sepulchers of the prophets, and condemn their fathers for putting them to death; making important boasts of their own righteousness, and of their assurance of salvation, in the midst of which they rose up with one consent, and treacherously and shamefully betrayed, and crucified the Saviour of the world! No wonder that the inquirer has turned aside with disgust, nor marvel that God has appointed a day when he will call the nations before him, and reward every man according to his works!

Enoch walked with God, and was taken home without tasting death.—Why were not *all* converted in his day and taken with him to glory! Noah, it is said, was perfect in his generation: and it is plain that he had communion with his Maker, and by his direction accomplished a work the parallel of which is not to be found in the annals of the world! Why were not the *world* converted, that the

flood might have been stayed? Men, from the days of *our* father Abraham, have talked, boasted, and extolled his faith; and he is even represented in the scriptures:—"The father of the faithful." Moses talked with the Lord face to face; received the great moral law, upon the basis of which those of all civilized governments are founded; led Israel forty years, and was taken home to receive the reward of his toils—then Jacob could realize his worth. Well was the question asked by our Lord, "How can the children of the bridechamber mourn while the bridegroom is with them?" It is said, that he travelled and taught the righteous principles of his kingdom, three years, during which he chose twelve men, and ordained them apostles, &c. The people saw and heard—they were particularly benefited, many of them, by being healed of infirmities, and diseases; of plagues, and devils: they saw him walk upon the water; they saw the winds and waves calmed at his command; they saw thousands fed to the full with a pittance, and the very powers of darkness tremble in his presence—and like others before them, considered it as a dream, or a common occurrence, till the time was fulfilled, and he was offered up. Yet while he was with them he said, you shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and shall not see it. He knew that calamity would fall upon that people, and the wrath of heaven overtake them to their overthrow; and when that devoted city was surrounded with armies, well may we conclude that they desired a protector possessing sufficient power to lead them to some safe place aside from the tumult of a siege.

Since the apostles fell asleep all men who profess a belief in the truth of their mission, extol their virtues and celebrate their fame. It seems to have been forgotten that they were men of infirmities and subject to all the feelings, passions, and imperfections common to other men. But it appears, that they, as others were before them, are looked upon as men of perfection, holiness, purity, and goodness, far in advance of any since. So were the characters of the prophets held in the days of these apostles. What can be the difference in the reward, whether a man died for righteousness' sake in the days of Abel, Zacharias, John, the twelve apostles chosen at Jerusalem, or since? Is not the *life* of one equally as precious as the other? and is not the truth, just as true?

But in reviewing the lives and acts of men in past generations, whenever we find a righteous man among them, there always were excuses for not giving heed or credence to his testimony. The people could see his imperfections; or, if no imperfections, supposed ones, and were always ready to frame an excuse upon that for not believing—No matter how pure the principles, nor how precious the teachings—an excuse was wanted—and an excuse was had.

The next generation, perhaps, was favoured with equally as righteous men, who were condemned upon the same principles of the former, while the acts and precepts of the former were the boasts of



the multitude; when, in reality, there doctrines were no more pure, their exertions to turn men to righteousness no greater, neither their walk any more circumspect—the grave of the former is considered to be holy, and his sepulcher is *garnished* while the latter is deprived a dwelling among men, or even an existence upon earth! Such is a specimen of the depravity and inconsistency of men, and such has been their conduct toward the righteous in centuries past.

When John the son of Zacharias came among the Jews, it is said that he came neither eating bread nor drinking wine. In another place it is said that his meat was locusts and wild honey. The Jews saw him, heard him preach, and were witnesses of the purity of the doctrines advocated—they wanted an excuse, and they soon found one—“He hath a devil!”—And who, among all generations, that valued his salvation, would be taught by, or follow one possessed of a devil?

The Saviour came in form and fashion of a man; he ate, drank, and walked about as a man, and they said, “Behold, a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!” You see an excuse was wanting, but not long wanting till it was found—Who would follow a dissipated leader? or who, among the *righteous* Pharisees would acknowledge a man who would condescend to eat with publicans and sinners? This was too much—they could not endure it. An individual teaching the doctrines of the kingdom of heaven, and declaring that that kingdom was nigh, or that it had already come, must appear different from others, or he could not be received. If he were athirst he must not drink, if faint he must not eat, and if weary he must not rest, because he had assumed the authority to teach the world righteousness, and he must be different in manners, and in constitution, if not in form, that all might be attracted by his singular appearance: that his singular demeanour might gain the reverence of the people, or he was an impostor—a false teacher—a wicked man—a sinner—and an accomplice of Beelzebub, the prince of devils!

If singularity of appearance, or difference of manners would command respect, certainly John would have been revered, and heard. To see one coming from the wilderness, clad with camels' hair, drinking neither wine nor strong drink, nor yet eating common food, must have awakened the curiosity of the curious, to the fullest extent. But there was one peculiarity in this man common to every righteous man before him, for which the people hated him, and for which he lost his life—he taught holiness, proclaimed repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, warned the people of the consequences of iniquity, and declared that the kingdom of heaven was at hand—*All* this was too much! To see one dressed so ridiculously, eating no common food, neither drinking wine like other men; stepping in advance of the learned and reverend Pharisees, wise doctors, and righteous scribes, and declaring, at the same time, that the Lord's

kingdom would soon appear, could not be borne—he must not teach—he must not assume—he must not attempt to lead the people after him—“He hath a devil!”

The Jews were willing, (professedly so,) to believe the ancient prophets, and follow the directions of heaven as delivered to the world by them; but when one came teaching the same doctrine, and proclaiming the same things, only that they were nearer, they would not hear. Men say if they could see they would believe; but I have thought the reverse, in this respect. If they cannot see they will believe.

One of two reasons may be assigned as the cause why the messengers of truth have been rejected—perhaps both. The multitude saw their imperfections, or supposed ones, and from that framed an excuse for rejecting them; or else in consequence of the corruption of their own hearts, when reproved, were not willing to repent; but sought to make a man an offender for a word: or for wearing camels' hair, eating locusts, drinking wine, or showing friendship to publicans and sinners!

When looking over the sacred scriptures, we seem to forget that they were given through men of imperfections, and subject to passions. It is a *general* belief that the ancient prophets were perfect—that no stain, or blemish ever appeared upon their characters while on earth, to be brought forward by the opposer as an excuse for not believing. The same is said of the apostles; but James said that Elias [Elijah] was a man subject to like passions as themselves, and yet he had that power with God that in answer to his prayer it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and a half.

There can be no doubt but those to whom he wrote looked upon the ancient prophets as a race of beings superior to any in those days; and in order to be constituted a prophet of God, a man must be perfect in every respect. The idea is, that he must be perfect according to their signification of the word. If a people were blessed with prophets, they must be the individuals who were to prescribe the laws by which they must be governed, even in their private walks. The generation following were ready to suppose, that those men who believed the word of God were as perfect as those to whom it was delivered supposed they must be, and were as forward to prescribe the rules by which they were governed, or rehearse laws and declare them to be the governing principles of the prophets, as though they themselves held the keys of the mysteries of heaven and had searched the archives of the generations of the world.

You will see that I have made mention of the Messiah; of his mission into the world, and of his walk and outward appearance; but do not understand me as attempting to place him on a level with men, or his mission on a parallel with those of the prophets and apostles—far from this. I view his mission such as none other could fill; that he was offered without spot to God a propitiation for our sins; that

he rose triumphant and victorious over the grave and him that has the power of death.—This man could not do.—It required a perfect sacrifice—man is imperfect.—It required a spotless offering—man is not spotless.—It required an infinite atonement—man is mortal.—I have, then, as you will see, made mention of our Lord, to show that individuals teaching truth, whether perfect or imperfect, have been looked upon as the worst of men. And that even our Saviour, the great Shepherd of Israel, was mocked and derided, and placed on a parallel with the prince of devils; and the prophets and apostles, though at this day, looked upon as perfect as perfection, were considered the basest of the human family by those among whom they lived. It is not rumour, though it is wafted by every gale, and reiterated by every zephyr, upon which we are to found our judgments of one's merits or demerits: If it is, we erect an altar upon which we sacrifice the most perfect of men, and establish a criterion by which the "vilest of the vile" may escape censure. But lest I weary you with too many remarks upon the history of the past, after a few upon the propriety of a narrative of the description I have proposed, I shall proceed.

### LETTER III.

**DEAR BROTHER:**—After a silence of another month, agreeably to my promise, I proceed upon the subject I proposed in the first No. of the Advocate. Perhaps an apology for brevity may not be improper, here, as many important incidents consequently transpiring in the organization and establishing of a society like the one whose history I am about to give to the world, are overlooked or lost, and soon buried with those who were the actors, will prevent my giving those minute and particular reflections which I have so often wished might have characterized the "Acts of the apostles," and the ancient saints. But such facts as are within my knowledge, will be given, without any reference to inconsistencies, in the minds of others, or impossibilities, in the feelings of such as do not give credence to the system of salvation and redemption so clearly set forth and so plainly written over the face of the sacred scriptures:

Upon the propriety, then, of a narrative of this kind, I have briefly to remark: It is known to you, that this church has suffered reproach and persecution, from a majority of mankind who have heard but a rumour, since its first organization. And further, you are also conversant with the fact, that whoever had the messengers of the fullness of the gospel began to proclaim its heavenly precepts and call upon men to embrace the same, than they were vilified and slandered by thousands who never saw their faces, and much less knew aught derogatory of their characters, moral or religious.—Upon this unfair



and unsaint like manner of procedure they have been giving in large sheets their own opinions of the incorrectness of our system, and attested volumes of our lives and characters.

Since, then, our opposers have been thus kind to introduce our cause before the public, it is no more than just that a correct account should be given; and since they have invariably sought to cast a shade over the truth, and hinder its influence from gaining ascendancy, it is also proper that it should be vindicated, by laying before the world a correct statement of events as they have transpired from time to time.

Whether I shall succeed so far in my purpose as to convince the public of the incorrectness of those scurrilous reports which have inundated our land, or even but a small portion of them, will be better ascertained when I close than when I commence; and I am content to submit it before the candid for perusal, and before the Judge of all for inspection, as I most assuredly believe that before ~~me~~ I must stand and answer for the deeds transacted in this life.

Should I, however, be instrumental in causing a few to hear before they judge, and understand both sides of this matter before they condemn, I shall have the satisfaction of seeing them embrace it, as I am certain that one is the inevitable fruit of the other. But to proceed:

You will recollect that I informed you, in my letter published in the first No. of the Messenger and Advocate, that this history would necessarily embrace the life and character of our esteemed friend and brother, J. SMITH, JR., one of the presidents of this church, and for information on that part of the subject, I refer you to his communication of the same, published in this paper. I shall, therefore, pass over that, till I come to the 17th year of his life.

It is necessary to premise this account by relating the situation of the public mind relative to religion, at this time: One Mr. Lane, a presiding Elder of the Methodist church, visited Palmyra, and vicinity. Elder Lane was a talented man possessing a good share of literary endowments, and apparent humility. There was a great awakening, or excitement raised on the subject of religion, and much enquiry for the word of life. Large additions were made to the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches.—Mr. Lane's manner of communication was peculiarly calculated to awaken the intellect of the hearer, and arouse the sinner to look about him for safety—much good instruction was always drawn from his discourses on the scriptures, and in common with others, our brother's mind became awakened.

For a length of time the reformation seemed to move in a harmonious manner, but, as the excitement ceased or those who had expressed anxieties, had professed a belief in the pardoning influence and condescension of the Saviour, a general struggle was made by the leading characters of the different sects, for proselytes. Then strife seemed to take the place of that apparent union and harmony which

had previously characterized the moves and exhortations of the old professors, and a cry—I am right—you are wrong—was introduced in their stead.

In this general strife for followers, his mother, one sister, and two of his natural brothers, were persuaded to unite with the Presbyterians. This gave opportunity for further reflection; and as will be seen in the sequel, laid a foundation, or was one means of laying a foundation for the attestation of the truths, or professions of truths, contained in that record called the word of God.

After strong solicitations to unite with one of those different societies, and seeing the apparent proselyting disposition manifested with equal warmth from each, his mind was led to more seriously contemplate the importance of a move of this kind. To profess Godliness without its benign influence upon the heart, was a thing so foreign from his feelings, that his spirit was not at rest day nor night. To unite with a society professing to be built upon the only sure foundation, and that profession be a vain one, was calculated, in its very nature, the more it was contemplated, the more to arouse the mind to the serious consequences of moving hastily, in a course fraught with eternal realities. To say he was right, and still be wrong, could not profit; and amid so many, some must be built upon the sand.

In this situation where could he go? If he went to one he was told they were right, and all others were wrong—If to another, the same was heard from those: All professed to be the true church; and if not, they were certainly hypocritical, because, if I am presented with a system of religion, and enquire of my teacher whether it is correct, and he informs me that he is not certain, he acknowledges at once that he is teaching without authority, and acting without a commission!

If one professed a degree of authority or preference in consequence of age or right, and that superiority was without evidence, it was insufficient to convince a mind once aroused to that degree of determination which at that time operated upon him. And upon farther reflecting, that the Saviour had said that the gate was straight and the way narrow that leads to life eternal, and that few entered there; and that the way was broad, and the gate wide which leadeth to destruction, and that many crowded its current, a proof from some source was wanting to settle the mind and give peace to the agitated bosom. It is not frequent that the minds of men are exercised with proper determination relative to obtaining a certainty of the things of God. They are too apt to rest short of that assurance which the Lord Jesus has so freely offered in his word to man, and which so beautifully characterizes his whole plan of salvation, as revealed to us.

#### LETTER IV.

DEAR BROTHER:

In my last, I apologized for the brief manner in which I should be obliged to give, in many instances, the history of

this church. Since then yours of Christmas has been received, but it was not my wish to be understood that I could not give the leading items of every important occurrence, at least so far as would effect my duty to my fellow-men, in such as contained important information upon the subject of doctrine, and as would render it intelligibly plain; but as there are, in a great house, many vessels, so in the history of a work of this magnitude, many items which would be interesting to those who follow, are forgotten. In fact, I deem every manifestation of the Holy Spirit, dictating the hearts of the saints in the way of righteousness, to be of importance, and this is one reason why I plead an apology.

You will recollect that I mentioned the time of a religious excitement, in Palmyra and vicinity to have been in the 17th year of our brother J. Smith, Jr.'s, age. This brings the date down to the year 1823.

I do not deem it to be necessary to write further on the subject of this excitement. It is doubted by many whether any real or essential good ever resulted from such excitements, while others advocate their propriety with warmth.

The mind is easily called up to reflection upon a matter of such deep importance, and it is just that it should be; but there is a regret occupying the heart when we consider the deep anxiety of thousands, who are lead away with a vain imagination, or a groundless hope, no better than the idle wind or the spider's web.

But if others were not benefited, our brother was urged forward and strengthened in the determination to know for himself of the certainty and reality of pure and holy religion.—And it is only necessary for me to say, that while this excitement continued, he continued to call upon the Lord in secret for a full manifestation of divine approbation, and for, to him, the all important information, if a Supreme being did exist, to have an assurance that he was accepted of him. This, most assuredly, was correct—it was right. The Lord has said, long since, and his word remains steadfast, that to him who knocks it shall be opened, and whosoever will, may come and partake of the waters of life freely.

To grant a humble penitent sinner a refreshing draught from this most pure of all fountains, and most desirable of all refreshments, to a thirsty soul, is a matter for the full performance of which the sacred record stands pledged. The Lord never said—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," to turn a deaf ear to those who were weary, when they call upon him. He never said, by the mouth of the prophet—"Ho, every one that thirsts, come ye to the waters," without passing it as a firm decree, at the same time, that he that should after come, should be filled with a joy unspeakable. Neither did he manifest by the Spirit to John upon the isle—"Let him that is athirst, come," and commend him to



send the same abroad, under any other consideration, than that "who-soever would, might take the water of life freely," to the remotest ages of time, or while there was a sinner upon his footstool.

These sacred and important promises are looked upon in our day as being given, either to another people, or in a figurative form, and consequently require *spiritualizing*, notwithstanding they are as conspicuously plain, and are meant to be understood according to their *literal* reading, as those passages which teach us of the creation of the world, and of the decree of its Maker to bring its inhabitants to judgment. But to proceed with my narrative:

On the evening of the 21st of September, 1823, previous to retiring to rest, our brother's mind was unusually wrought up on the subject which had so long agitated his mind—his heart was drawn out in fervent prayer, and his whole soul was so lost to every thing of a temporal nature, that earth, to him, had lost its charms, and all he desired was to be prepared in heart to commune with some kind messenger who could communicate to him the desired information of his acceptance with God.

At length the family retired, and he, as usual, bent his way, though in silence, where others might have rested their weary frames "locked fast in sleep's embrace;" but repose had fled, and accustomed slumber had spread her refreshing hand over others beside him—he continued still to pray—his heart, though once hard and obdurate, was softened, and that mind which had often flitted, like the "wild bird of passage," had settled upon a determined basis not to be decoyed or driven from its purpose.

In this situation hours passed unnumbered—how many or how few I know not, neither is he able to inform me; but supposes it must have been eleven or twelve and perhaps later, as the noise and bustle of the family, in retiring, had long since ceased.—While continuing in prayer for a manifestation in some way that his sins were forgiven; endeavouring to exercise faith in the scriptures, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a purer and far more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room.—Indeed, to use his own description, the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming and unquenchable fire. This sudden appearance of a light so bright, as must naturally be expected, occasioned a shock or sensation, visible to the extremities of the body. It was, however, followed with a calmness and serenity of mind, and an overwhelming rapture of joy that surpassed understanding, and in a moment a personage stood before him.

Notwithstanding the room was previously filled with light above the brightness of the sun, as I have before described, yet there seemed to be an additional glory surrounding or accompanying this personage, which shone with an increased degree of brilliancy, of which he was in the midst; and though his countenance was as lightning, yet it

was of a pleasing, innocent and glorious appearance, so much so, that every fear was banished from the heart, and nothing but calmness pervaded the soul.

It is no easy task to describe the appearance of a messenger from the skies—indeed, I doubt there being an individual clothed with perishable clay, who is capable to do this work. To be sure, the Lord appeared to his apostles after his resurrection, and we do not learn as they were in the least difficulted to look upon him; but from John's description upon Patmos, we learn that he is there represented as most glorious in appearance; and from other items in the sacred scriptures we have the fact recorded where *angels* appeared and conversed with men, and there was no difficulty on the part of the individuals, to endure their presence; and others where their glory was so conspicuous that they could not endure. The last description or appearance is the one to which I refer, when I say that it is no easy task to describe their glory.

But it may be well to relate the particulars as far as given—The stature of this personage was a little above the common size of men in this age: his garment was perfectly white, and had the appearance of being without seam.

Though fear was banished from his heart yet his surprise was no less when he heard him declare himself to be a messenger sent by commandment of the Lord, to deliver a special message, and to witness to him that his sins were forgiven, and that his prayers were heard; and that the scriptures might be fulfilled, which say—"God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things which are, that no flesh should glory in his presence. Therefore, says the Lord, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; the wisdom of their wise shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid; for according to his covenant which he made with his ancient saints, his people, the house of Israel, must come to a knowledge of the gospel, and own that Messiah whom their fathers rejected, and with them the fulness of the Gentiles be gathered in, to rejoice in one fold under one Shepherd."

"This cannot be brought about until first certain preparatory things are accomplished, for so has the Lord purposed in his own mind. He has therefore chosen you as an instrument in his hand to bring to light that which shall perform his act, his strange act, and bring to pass a marvellous work and a wonder. Wherever the sound shall go it shall cause the ears of men to tingle, and wherever it shall be proclaimed, the pure in heart shall rejoice, while those who draw near to God with their mouths, and honour him with their lips while their hearts are far from him, will seek its overthrow, and the destruction of those by whose hands it is carried. Therefore, marvel not if your name is made a derision, and had as a by-word among such,

if you are the instrument in bringing it, by the gift of God, to the knowledge of the people."

He then proceeded and gave a general account of the promises made to the fathers, and also gave a history of the aborigines of this country, and said they were literal descendants of Abraham. He represented them as once being an enlightened and intelligent people, possessing a correct knowledge of the gospel, and the plan of restoration and redemption. He said this history was written and deposited not far from that place, and that it was our brother's privilege, if obedient to the commandments of the Lord, to obtain, and translate the same by the means of the Urim and Thummim, which were deposited for that purpose with the record.

"Yet," said he, "the scripture must be fulfilled before it is translated, which says that the words of a book, which were sealed, were presented to the learned; for thus has God determined to leave men without excuse, and show to the meek that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save."

A part of the book was sealed, and was not to be opened yet. The sealed part, said he, contains the same revelation which was given to John upon the isle of Patmos, and when the people of the Lord are prepared, and found worthy, then it will be unfolded unto them.

On the subject of bringing to light the unsealed part of this record, it may be proper to say, that our brother was expressly informed, that it must be done with an eye single to the glory of God; if this consideration did not wholly characterize all his proceedings in relation to it, the adversary of truth would overcome him, or at least prevent his making that proficiency in this glorious work which he otherwise would.

While describing the place where the record was deposited, he gave a minute relation of it, and the vision of his mind being opened at the same time, he was permitted to view it critically; and previously being acquainted with the place, he was able to follow the direction of the vision, afterward, according to the voice of the angel, and obtain the book.

I close for the present by subscribing myself as ever, your brother in Christ.

#### LETTER V.

DEAR BROTHER:—

You will notice in my last, on rehearsing the words of the angel, where he communicated to our brother—that his sins were forgiven, and that he was called of the Lord to bring to light, by the gift of inspiration, this important intelligence, an item like the following—"God has chosen the foolish things of the world, and things which are despised, God has chosen;" &c. This, I conceive to be an important item—Not many mighty and noble, were



called in ancient times, because they always knew so much that God could not teach them, and a man that would listen to the voice of the Lord and follow the teachings of heaven, always was despised, and considered to be of the foolish class—Paul proves this fact, when he says, “We are made as the filth of the world—the off-scouring of all things unto this day.”

I am aware, that a rehearsal of visions of angels at this day, is as inconsistent with a portion of mankind as it formerly was, after all the boast of this wise generation in the knowledge of the truth; but there is a uniformity so complete, that on the reflection, one is led to rejoice that it is so.

In my last I gave an imperfect description of the angel, and was obliged to do so, for the reason, that my pen would fail to describe an angel in his glory, or the glory of God. I also gave a few sentences which he uttered on the subject of the gathering of Israel, &c. Since writing the former, I have thought it would, perhaps, be interesting to give something more full on this important subject, as well as a revelation of the gospel. That these holy personages should feel a deep interest in the accomplishment of the glorious purposes of the Lord, in his work in the last days, is consistent, when we view critically, what is recorded of their sayings in the holy Scriptures.

You will remember to have read in Daniel—“And at that time, [the last days] shall Michael stand up, the great prince, who stands for the children of thy people;” and also in Revelations—“I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets.” Please compare these sayings with that singular expression in Heb. “Are they [angels] not all ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” And then let me ask nine questions:

First, are the angels now in glory, the former prophets and servants of God? Secondly: Are they brethren of those who keep his commandments on earth? and thirdly, have brethren and fleshly kindred, in the kingdom of God, feelings of respect and condescension enough to speak to each other, though one may be in heaven and the other on the earth?

Fourthly: If angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation, will they not minister for those heirs? and fifthly, if they do will any one know it?

Sixthly: Will Michael, the archangel, the great prince, stand up in the last days for Israel? Seventhly: will he defend them from their enemies? Eighthly: will he lead them, as they were once led; and ninthly, if so, will he be seen? These questions I leave without answering, because the reasoning is so plain, and so many might be brought, that they must be at hand in the heart and mind of every saint. But to the gospel, and then to the gathering.

The great plan of redemption being prepared before the fall of man, and the salvation of the human family being as precious in the sight of the Lord at one time as at another, before the Messiah came in

the flesh and was crucified, as after the gospel was preached, and many were found obedient to the same. This Gospel being the same from the beginning, its ordinances were also unchangeable. Men were commanded to repent and be baptized by water in the name of the Lord: and were then blessed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit being thus given, men were enabled to look forward to the time of the coming of the Son of Man, and to rejoice in that day, because through that sacrifice they looked for a remission of their sins and for their redemption.

Had it not been for this plan of salvation, which God devised before the fall, man must have remained miserable for ever, after transgressing the first commandment, because in consequence of that transgression he had rendered himself unworthy the presence of his Maker. He being therefore cast out, the gospel was preached, and this hope of eternal life was set before him, by the ministering of angels who delivered it as they were commanded.

Not only did the ancients look forward to the time of the coming of the Messiah in the flesh, with delight, but there was another day for which they sought and for which they prayed. Knowing, as they did, that the fall had brought upon them death, and that man was sensual and evil, they longed for a day when the earth might again rest, and appear as in the beginning—when evil might be unknown upon its face, and all creation enjoy one undisturbed peace for a thousand years.

This being sought for in faith, it pleased the Lord to covenant with them to roll on his purposes until he should bring it to pass—and though many generations were to be gathered to their fathers, yet the righteous, those who should, in their lives, embrace the gospel, and live obedient to its requirements, rise and inherit it during this reign of peace.

From time to time the faithful servants of the Lord have endeavored to raise up a people who should be found worthy to inherit this rest, (for it was called the rest of the righteous or the day of the Lord's rest, prepared for the righteous;) but were not able to sanctify them that they could endure the presence of the Lord, excepting Enoch, who, with his people, for their righteousness, were taken into heaven, with a promise that they should yet see that day when the whole earth should be covered with glory.

Moses labored diligently to effect this object, but in consequence of the transgressions and rebellions of the children of Israel, God swore in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest; and in consequence of this decree, and their transgressions since, they have been scattered to the four winds, and are thus to remain till the Lord gathers them in by his own power.

To a remnant of them the gospel was preached by the Messiah in person, but they rejected his voice, though it was raised daily among them. The apostles continued to hold forth the same; after the cru-

cifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, until they would hear it no longer; and then they were commanded to turn to the Gentiles.

They however laboured faithfully to turn that people from error; that they might be the happy partakers of mercy, and save themselves from the impending storm that hung over them. They were commanded to preach Jesus Christ night and day—to preach through him the resurrection from the dead—to declare that all who would embrace the gospel, repent, and be baptized for the remission of their sins, should be saved—to declare that this was the only sure foundation on which they could build and be safe—that God had again visited his people in consequence of his covenant with their fathers, and that if they would they might be the first who should receive these glad tidings, and have the unspeakable joy of carrying the same to all people; for before the day of rest comes, it must go to all nations, kindreds and tongues.

But in consequence of their rejecting the gospel, the Lord suffered them to be again scattered; their land to be wasted and their beautiful city to be trodden down of the Gentiles, until their time should be fulfilled.

In the last days, to fulfil the promises to the ancient prophets, when the Lord is to pour out his spirit upon all flesh, he has determined to bring to light his gospel, to the Gentiles, that it may go to the house of Israel. This gospel has been perverted and men have wandered in darkness. That commission given to the apostles at Jerusalem, so easy to be understood, has been hid from the world, because of evil, and the honest have been led by the designing, till there are none to be found who are practising the ordinances of the gospel, as they were anciently delivered.

But the time has now arrived, in which, according to his covenants, the Lord will manifest to the faithful that he is the same to-day and forever, and that the cup of suffering of his people, the house of Israel, is nearly filled; and that the way may be prepared before their face he will bring to the knowledge of the people the gospel as it was preached by his servants on this land, and manifest to the obedient the truth of the same, by the power of the Holy Spirit; for the time is near when his sons and daughters will prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions, and those who are thus favoured will be such as embrace the gospel as it was delivered in old times, and they shall be blessed with signs following.

Farther on the subject of the gathering of Israel.—This was perfectly understood by all ancient prophets. Moses prophesied of the affliction which should come upon that people even after the coming of the Messiah, where he said; and evil will befall you in the latter days; because ye will do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger through the works of your hands. Connecting this with a prophecy in the song which follows, which was given to Moses in the tabernacle—remembering the expression—"in the latter days"—



where the Lord foretells all their evil, and their being resolved to mercy, to such as seek the peace of Israel much instruction may be gained. It is as follows:

"I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling with the man of gray hairs."

But after all this, he will judge their enemies and avenge them of theirs; for he says:

"If I whet my glittering sword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I will render vengeance to my enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh."

After all this—after Israel has been restored, and afflicted and his enemies have also been chastised, the Lord says: "Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land and to his people."

I will give a further detail of the promises to Israel, hereafter, as rehearsed by the angel. Accept assurance of my esteem as ever.

#### LETTER VI

DEAR SIR.—

I gave, in my last, a few words, on the subject of a few items, as spoken by the angel at the time the knowledge of the record of the Nephites was communicated to our brother, and in consequence of the subject of the gospel and that of the gathering of Israel's being so connected, I found it difficult to speak of the one without mentioning the other; and this may not be improper, as it is evident, that the Lord has decreed to bring forth the fulness of the gospel in the last days, previous to gathering Jacob, but a preparatory work, and the other is to follow in quick succession.

This being of so much importance, and of so deep interest to the saints, I have thought best to give a farther detail of the heavenly message, and if I do not give it in the precise words, shall strictly confine myself to the facts in substance.

David said, (Ps. C.) "make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands, that is, all the earth. Serve the Lord with gladness: Come before his presence with singing." This he said in view of the glorious period for which he often prayed, and was anxious to behold, which he knew could not take place until the knowledge of the glory of God covered all lands, or all the earth. Again he says, [Ps. cvii] "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: For his mercy endureth forever. Let

the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered out of the lands from the east, and from the west; from the north and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in. Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses; and led them in the right way that they might go to the city of habitation.

Most clearly was it shown to the prophet, that the righteous should be gathered from all the earth: He knew that the children of Israel were led from Egypt, by the right hand of the Lord, and permitted to possess the land of Canaan, though they were rebellious in the desert, but he farther knew, that they were not gathered from the east, the west, the north and the south, at that time; for it was clearly manifested that the Lord himself would prepare a habitation, even as he said, when he would lead them to a city of refuge. In that, David saw a promise for the righteous, [see cxliv Ps.] when they should be delivered from those who oppressed them, and from the hand of strange children, or the enemies of the Lord; that their sons should be like plants grown up in their youth, and their daughters like corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a beautiful palace. It is then that the sons and daughters shall prophesy, old men dream dreams, and young men see visions. At that time the garners of the righteous will be full, affording all manner of store. It was while contemplating this time, and viewing this happy state of the righteous, that he further says: The Lord shall reign forever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations—Praise ye the Lord!

Isaiah, who was on the earth at the time the ten tribes of Israel were led away captive from the land of Canaan, was shown not only their calamity and affliction, but the time when they were to be delivered. After reproving them for their corruption and blindness, he prophesies of their dispersion. He says, Your country is desolate, your cities are burnt with fire: Your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is thus made desolate, being overthrown by strangers. He further says, while speaking of the iniquity of that people. Thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loves gifts, and follows after rewards: They judge not the fatherless, neither does the cause of the widow come unto them. Therefore, says the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of my enemies. But after this calamity has befallen Israel, and the Lord has poured upon them his afflicting judgments, as he said by the mouth of Moses—I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend my arrows upon them. They shall be afflicted with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them; with the poison of serpents of the earth—he will also fulfil this further prediction uttered by the mouth of Isaiah. I will

then my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: and I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward you shall be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Then will be fulfilled, also, the saying of David: And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.

Isaiah continues his prophecy concerning Israel, and tells them what would be done for them in the last days; for thus it is written: The word that Isaiah the son of Amos saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills;—and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nations shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of his people in Zion, and upon their assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence, or above shall be a covering and a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain. And his people shall dwell safely, they shall possess the land forever, even the land which was promised to their fathers for an everlasting inheritance: for behold, says the Lord by the mouth of the prophet: The day will come that I will sow the house of Israel with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, says the Lord.

For this happy situation and blessed state of Israel, did the prophets look, and obtained a promise, that, though the house of Israel and Judah, should violate the covenant, the Lord in the last days would make with them a new one: not according to the one which he made with their fathers in the day that he took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; which, said the Lord, my covenant they broke, although I was a husband and a father unto them: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

For thus says the Lord, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be



builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving, and the voice of them that make merry:—and I will multiply them and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them and they shall not be small. Their children also shall be as aforetime, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all that oppress them. Their nobles shall be of themselves and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them.

At the same time, says the Lord, will I be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people; I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth; I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, keep not back:—bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. And in those days, and at that time, says the Lord, though Israel and Judah have been driven and scattered, they shall come together, they shall even come weeping; for with supplications will I lead them: they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward, and say, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten; and watchmen upon Mount Ephraim shall say, Arise, and let us go up to Zion, unto the holy Mount of the Lord our God; for he will teach us of his ways, and instruct us to walk in his paths. That the way for this to be fully accomplished, may be prepared, the Lord will utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and with his mighty wind shake his hand over the river and smite it in its seven streams, and make men go over dry-shod. And there shall be a high-way for the remnant of his people, which shall be, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel when they came up out of the land of Egypt.

And thus shall Israel come: not a dark corner of the earth shall remain unexplored, nor an island of the seas be left without being visited; for as the Lord has removed them into all corners of the earth, he will cause his mercy to be as abundantly manifested in their gathering as his wrath in their dispersion, until they are gathered according to the covenant. He will, as he said by the prophet, send for many fishers, and they shall fish them; and after send for many hunters, who shall hunt them; not as their enemies have to afflict, but with glad tidings of great joy, with a message of peace, and a call for their return.

And it will come to pass, that though the house of Israel has forsaken the Lord, and bowed down and worshipping other gods, which were no gods, and been cast out before the face of the world, they will know the voice of the Shepherd when he calls upon them this time; for soon his day of power comes, and in it his people will be willing to hearken to his counsel; and even now are they already beginning to be stirred up in their hearts to search for these things, and are daily reading the ancient prophets, and are marking the times, and seasons of their fulfilment. Thus God is preparing the way for their return.

But it is necessary that you should understand, that what is to be

fulfilled in the last days, is not only for the benefit of Israel, but the Gentiles, if they will repent and embrace the gospel, for they are to be remembered also in the same covenant, and are to be fellow heirs with the seed of Abraham, inasmuch as they are so by faith—for God is no respecter of persons. This was shown to Moses, when he wrote—Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people!

In consequence of the transgression of the Jews at the coming of the Lord, the Gentiles were called into the kingdom, and for this obedience, are to be favoured with the gospel in its fulness first, in the last days; for it is written. The first shall be last, and the last first. Therefore, when the fulness of the gospel, as was preached by the righteous, upon this land, shall come forth, it shall be declared to the Gentiles first, and whoso will repent shall be delivered, for they shall understand the plan of salvation and restoration for Israel, as the Lord manifested to the ancients. They shall be baptized with water and with the Spirit—they shall lift up their hearts with joy and gladness, for the time of their redemption shall also roll on, and for their obedience to the faith they shall see the house of Jacob come with great glory, even with songs of everlasting joy, and with him partake of salvation.

Therefore, as the time draws near when the sun is to be darkened, the moon turn to blood, and the stars fall from heaven, the Lord will bring to the knowledge of his people his commandments and statutes, that they may be prepared to stand when the earth shall reel to and fro as a drunken man, earthquakes cause the nations to tremble, and the destroying angel goes forth to waste the inhabitants at noon-day: for so great are to be the calamities which are to come upon the inhabitants of the earth before the coming of the Son of Man the second time, that whoso is not prepared cannot abide; but such as are found faithful, and remain, shall be gathered with his people and caught up to meet the Lord in the cloud, and so shall they inherit eternal life.

I have now given you a rehearsal of what was communicated to our brother, when he was directed to go and obtain the record of the Nephites. I may have missed in arrangement in some instances, but the principle is preserved, and you will be able to bring forward abundance of corroborating scripture upon the subject of the gospel and of the gathering. You are aware of the fact, that to give a minute rehearsal of a lengthy interview with a heavenly messenger, is very difficult, unless one is assisted immediately with the gift of inspiration. There is another item I wish to notice on the subject of visions. The spirit you know, searches all things, even the deep things of God. When God manifests to his servants those things that are to come, or those which have been, he does it by unfolding them by the power of that Spirit which comprehends all things, always; and so much may be shown and made perfectly plain to the understanding in a short time, that to the world, who are occupied all their life to learn a little, look at the relation of it, and are disposed to call

it false. You will understand then, by this, that while those glorious things were being rehearsed, the vision was also opened, so that our brother was permitted to see and understand much more full and perfect than I am able to communicate in writing. I know much may be conveyed to the understanding in writing; and many marvellous truths set forth with the pen, but after all it is but a shadow, compared to an open vision of seeing, hearing and realizing eternal things. And if the fact was known, it would be found, that of all the heavenly communications to the ancients, we have no more in comparison than the alphabet to a quarto vocabulary. It is said, and I believe the account, that the Lord showed the brother of Jared [Moriancumer] all things which were to transpire from that day to the end of the earth, as well as those which had taken place. I believe that Moses was permitted to see the same, as the Lord caused them to pass, in vision before him as he stood upon the mount; I believe that the Lord Jesus told many things to his apostles which are not written, and after his ascension unfolded all things unto them; I believe that Nephi, the son of Lehi, whom the Lord brought out of Jerusalem, saw the same; I believe that the twelve upon this continent, whom the Lord chose to preach his gospel, when he came down to manifest to this branch of the house of Israel, that he had other sheep who should hear his voice, were also permitted to behold the same mighty things transpire in vision before their eyes; and I believe that the angel Moroni, whose words I have been rehearsing, who communicated the knowledge of the record of the Nephites, in this age, saw also, before he hid up the same unto the Lord, great and marvellous things, which were to transpire when the same should come forth; and I also believe, that God will give line upon line, precept upon precept, to his saints, until all these things will be unfolded to them, and they finally sanctified and brought into the Celestial glory, where tears will be wiped from all faces, and sighing and sorrowing flee away!

May the Lord preserve you from evil and reward you richly for all your afflictions, and crown you in his kingdom. Amen.

Accept, as ever, assurances of the fellowship and esteem of your unworthy brother in the gospel.

#### LETTER VII.

DEAR BROTHER,—

You will remember that in my last I brought my subject down to the evening, or night of the 21st of September, 1823, and gave an outline of the conversation of the angel upon the important fact of the blessings, promises and covenants to Israel, and the great manifestations of favor to the world in the ushering in of the fulness of the gospel, to prepare the way for the second advent of the Messiah, when he comes in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels.



A remarkable fact is to be noticed with regard to this vision. In ancient time the Lord warned some of his servants in dreams: for instance, Joseph, the husband of Mary, was warned in a dream to take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt; also the wise men were warned of the Lord in a dream not to return to Herod; and when "out of Egypt the Son was called," the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph again: also he was warned in a dream to turn aside into the parts of Galilee. Such were the manifestations to Joseph, the favoured descendant of the father of the faithful in dreams, and in them the Lord fulfilled his purposes: But the one of which I have been speaking is what would have been called an open vision. And though it was in the night, yet it was not a dream. There is no room for conjecture in this matter, and to talk of deception would be to sport with the common sense of every man who knows when he is awake, when he sees and when he does not see.

He could not have been deceived in the fact that a being of some kind appeared to him; and that it was an heavenly one, the fulfilment of his words so minutely, up to this time, in addition to the truth and word of salvation which has been developed to this generation, in the book of Mormon, ought to be conclusive evidence to the mind of every man who is privileged to hear of the same. He was awake, and in solemn prayer, as you will bear in mind, when the angel made his appearance; from that glory which surrounded him, the room was lit up to a perfect brilliancy, so that darkness wholly disappeared: he heard his words with his ears, and received a joy and happiness indescribable by hearing that his own sins were forgiven, and his former transgressions to be remembered against him no more, if he then continued to walk before the Lord according to his holy commandments. He also saw him depart, the light and glory withdraw, leaving a calmness and peace of soul past the language of man to paint—Was he deceived?

Far from this; for the vision was renewed twice before morning, unfolding farther and still farther the mysteries of godliness and those things to come. In the morning he went to his labour as usual, but soon the vision of the heavenly messenger was renewed, instructing him to go immediately and view those things of which he had been informed, with a promise that he should obtain them if he followed the directions and went with an eye single to the glory of God.

Accordingly he repaired to the place which had thus been described. But it is necessary to give you more fully the express instructions of the angel, with regard to the object of this work in which our brother had now engaged—He was to remember that it was the work of the Lord, to fulfil certain promises previously made to a branch of the house of Israel of the tribe of Joseph, and when it should be brought forth must be done expressly with an eye, as I said before, single to

the glory of God, and to the glory of the Father, and to the glory of the Son, and to the glory of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

the glory of God, and the welfare and restoration of the house of Israel.

You will understand, then, that no motive of a pecuniary, or earthly nature, was to be suffered to take the lead of the heart of the man thus favoured. The allurements of vice, the contaminating influence of wealth, without the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, must have no place in the heart nor be suffered to take from it that warm desire for the glory and kingdom of the Lord, or, instead of obtaining, disappointment and reproof would most assuredly follow. Such was the instruction and this the caution.

Alternately, as we could naturally expect, the thought of the previous vision was ruminating in his mind, with a reflection of the brightness and glory of the heavenly messenger; but again a thought would start across the mind on the prospects of obtaining so desirable a treasure—one in all human probability sufficient to raise him above a level with the common earthly fortunes of his fellow men, and relieve his family from want, in which by misfortune and sickness they were placed.

It is very natural to suppose that the mind would revolve upon those scenes which had passed, when those who had acquired a *little* of this world's goods, by industry and economy, with the blessings of health or friends, or by art and intrigue, from the pockets of the day-laborer, or the widow and the fatherless, had passed by with a stiff neck and a cold heart, scorning the virtuous because they were poor, and lording over those who were subjected to suffer the miseries of this life.

Alternately did these, with a swift reflection of the words of the holy messenger,—"Remember, that he who does this work, who is thus favored of the Lord, must do it with his eye single to the glory of the same, and the welfare and restoration of the scattered remnants of the house of Israel"—rush upon his mind with the quickness of electricity. Here was a struggle indeed; for when he calmly reflected upon his errand, he knew that if God did not give, he could not obtain; and again, with the thought or hope of obtaining, his mind would be carried back to its former reflection of poverty, abuse, —wealth, grandeur and ease, until before arriving at the place described, this wholly occupied his desire; and when he thought upon the fact of what was previously shown him, it was only with an assurance that he should obtain, and accomplish his desire in relieving himself and friends from want.

A history of the inhabitants who peopled this continent, previous to its being discovered to Europeans by Columbus, must be interesting to every man; and as it would develop the important fact, that the present race were descendants of Abraham, and were to be remembered in the immutable covenant of the Most High to that man, and be restored to a knowledge of the gospel, that they, with all nations might rejoice, seemed to inspire further thoughts of gain and income from

such a valuable history. Surely, thought he, every man will prize with eagerness, this knowledge, and this incalculable income will be mine. Enough to raise the expectations of any one of like inexperience, placed in similar circumstances. But the important point in this matter is, that man does not see as the Lord, neither are his purposes like his. The small things of this life are but dust in comparison with salvation and eternal life.

It is sufficient to say that such were his reflections during his walk of from two to three miles: the distance from his father's house to the place pointed out. And to use his own words it seemed as though two invisible powers were influencing, or striving to influence his mind—one with the reflection that if he obtained the object of his pursuit, it would be through the mercy and condescension of the Lord, and that every act or performance in relation to it, must be in strict accordance with the instruction of that personage who communicated the intelligence to him first; and the other with the thoughts and reflections like those previously mentioned—contrasting his former and present circumstances in life with those to come. That precious instruction recorded on the sacred page—pray always—which was expressly impressed upon him, was at length entirely forgotten, and as I previously remarked, a fixed determination to obtain and aggrandize himself, occupied his mind when he arrived at the place where the record was found.

I must now give you some description of the place where, and the manner in which these records were deposited.

You are acquainted with the mail road from Palmyra, Wayne Co. to Canandaigua, Ontario Co. N. Y. and also, as you pass from the former to the latter place, before arriving at the little village of Manchester, say from three to four, or about four miles from Palmyra, you pass a large hill on the east side of the road. Why I say large, is, because it is as large perhaps, as any in that country. To a person acquainted with this road, a description would be unnecessary, as it is the largest and rises the highest of any on that route. The north end rises quite sudden until it assumes a level with the more southerly extremity, and I think I may say an elevation higher than at the south a short distance, say half or three fourths of a mile. As you pass toward Canandaigua it lessens gradually until the surface assumes its common level, or is broken by other smaller hills or ridges, water courses and ravines. I think I am justified in saying that this is the highest hill for some distance round, and I am certain that its appearance, as it rises so suddenly from a plain on the north, must attract the notice of the traveller as he passes by.

At about one mile west rises another ridge of less height, running parallel with the former, leaving a beautiful vale between. The soil is of the first quality for the country, and under a state of cultivation, which gives a prospect at once imposing, when one reflects on the fact, that here, between these hills, the entire power and national strength of both the Jaredites and Nephites were destroyed.



By turning to the 529th and 530th pages of the Book of Mormon you will read Mormon's account of the last great struggle of his people, as they were encamped round this hill Cumorah. [It is printed Camorah, which is an error.] In this valley fell the remaining strength and pride of a once powerful people, the Nephites—once so highly favored of the Lord, but at that time in darkness, doomed to suffer extermination by the hand of their barbarous and uncivilized brethren. From the top of this hill, Mormon, with a few others, after the battle, gazed with horror upon the mangled remains of those who, the day before, were filled with anxiety, hope or doubt. A few had fled to the South, who were hunted down by the victorious party, and all who would not deny the Saviour and his religion, were put to death. Mormon himself, according to the record of his son Moroni, was also slain.

But a long time previous to this national disaster it appears from his own account, he foresaw approaching destruction. In fact, if he perused the records of his fathers, which were in his possession, he could have learned that such would be the case. Alma, who lived before the coming of the Messiah, prophesies this. He however, by divine appointment, abridged from these records, in his own style and language, a short account of the more important and prominent items, from the days of Lehi to his own time, after which he deposited, as he says, on the 529th page, all the records in this same hill, Cumorah, and after gave his small record to his son Moroni, who, as appears from the same, finished, after witnessing the extinction of his people as a nation.

It was not the wicked who overcame the righteous: far from this: it was the wicked against the wicked, and by the wicked the wicked were punished. The Nephites who were once enlightened, had fallen from a more elevated standing as to favour and privilege before the Lord, in consequence of the righteousness of their fathers, and now falling below, for such was actually the case, were suffered to be overcome, and the land was left to the possession of the red men, who were without intelligence, only in the affairs of their wars; and having no records, only preserving their history by tradition from father to son, lost the account of their true origin, and wandered from river to river, from hill to hill, from mountain to mountain, from sea to sea, till the land was again peopled, in a measure, by a rude, wild, revengeful, warlike and barbarous race. Such are our Indians.

This hill, by the Jaredites, was called Ramah: by it, or around it, the famous army of Coriantumr pitched their tent. Coriantumr was the last king of the Jaredites. The opposing army were to the west, and in this same valley, and near by, from day to day, did that mighty race spill their blood, in wrath, contending as it were, brother against brother, and father against son. In this same spot, in full view from the top of this same hill, one may gaze with astonishment upon the ground which was twice covered with the dead and dying of our

fellow-men. Here may be seen were once sunk to naught the pride and strength of two mighty nations; and here may be contemplated, in solitude, while nothing but the faithful record of Mormon and Moroni is now extant to inform us of the fact, scenes of misery and distress—the aged, whose silver locks in other places and at other times would command reverence; the mother, who in other circumstances would be spared from violence; the infant, whose tender cries would be regarded and listened to with a feeling of compassion and tenderness; and the virgin, whose grace, beauty and modesty, would be esteemed and held inviolate by all good men and enlightened and civilized nations, alike disregarded and treated with scorn! In vain did the hoary head and man of gray hairs ask for mercy; in vain did the mother plead for compassion; in vain did the helpless and harmless infant weep for very anguish, and in vain did the virgin seek to escape the ruthless hand of revengeful foes and demons in human form—all alike were trampled down by the feet of the strong, and crushed beneath the rage of battle and war! Alas, who can reflect upon the last struggles of great and populous nations, sinking to dust beneath the hand of justice and retribution, without weeping over the corruption of the human heart, and sighing for the hour when the clangor of arms shall no more be heard, nor the calamities of contending armies no more experience for a thousand years? Alas, the calamity of war, the extinction of nations, the ruin of kingdoms, the fall of empires and the dissolution of governments! O the misery, distress and evil attendant on these! Who can contemplate like scenes without sorrowing, and who so destitute of commiseration as not to be pained that man has fallen so low, so far beneath the station in which he was created?

In this vale lie commingled, in one mass of ruin, the ashes of thousands, and in this vale was destined to consume the fair forms and vigorous systems of tens of thousands of the human race—blood mixed with blood, flesh with flesh, bones with bones, and dust with dust! When the vital spark which animated their clay had fled, each lifeless lump lay on one common level—cold and inanimate. Those bosoms which had burned with rage against each other for real or supposed injury, had now ceased to heave with malice; those arms which were, a few moments before nerved with strength, had alike become paralyzed, and those hearts which had been fired with revenge, had now ceased to beat, and the head to think—in silence, in solitude, and in disgrace alike, they have long since turned to earth, to their mother dust, to await the august, and to millions, awful hour, when the trump of the Son of God shall echo and re-echo from the skies, and they come forth, quickened and immortalized, to not only stand in each other's presence, but before the bar of him who is Eternal!

With sentiments of pure respect, I conclude by subscribing myself your brother in the gospel.

## LETTER VIII.

DEAR BROTHER,—

In my last I said I should give, partially, a "description of the place where, and the manner in which these records were deposited:" the first promise I have fulfilled, and must proceed to the latter:

The hill of which I have been speaking, at the time mentioned, presented a varied appearance: the north end rose suddenly from the plain, forming a promontory without timber, but covered with grass. As you passed to the south you soon came to scattering timber, the surface having been cleared by art or by wind; and a short distance further left, you are surrounded with the common forest of the country. It is necessary to observe, that even the part cleared was only occupied for pasturage, its steep ascent and narrow summit not admitting the plow of the husbandman, with any degree of ease or profit. It was at the second mentioned place where the record was found to be deposited, on the west side of the hill, not far from the top down its side; and when myself visited the place in the year 1830, there were several trees standing: enough to cause a shade in summer, but not so much as to prevent the surface being covered with grass—which was also the case when the record was first found.

Whatever may be the feeling of men on the reflection of past acts which have been performed on certain portions or spots of this earth, I know not, neither does it add or diminish to nor from the reality of my subject. When Moses heard the voice of God, at the foot of Horeb, out of the burning bush, he was commanded to take his shoes off his feet, for the ground on which he stood was holy. The same may be observed when Joshua beheld the "Captain of the Lord's host" by Jerico. And I confess that my mind was filled with many reflections; and though I did not *then* loose my shoe, yet with gratitude to God did I offer up the sacrifice of my heart.

How far below the surface these records were placed by Moroni, I am unable to say; but from the fact that they had been some fourteen hundred years buried, and that too on the side of a hill so steep, one is ready to conclude that they were some feet below, as the earth would naturally wear more or less in that length of time. But they being placed toward the top of the hill, the ground would not remove as much as two-thirds, perhaps. Another circumstance would prevent a wearing of the earth: in all probability, as soon as timber had time to grow, the hill was covered, after the Nephites were destroyed, and the roots of the same would hold the surface. However, on this point I shall leave every man to draw his own conclusion, and form his own speculation, as I only promised to give a description of the place at the time the records were found in 1823. It is suffi-



cient for my present purpose, to know, that such is the fact: that in 1823, yes, 1828, a man with whom I have had the most intimate and personal acquaintance, for almost seven years, actually discovered by the vision of God, the plates from which the book of Mormon, as much as it is disbelieved, was translated! Such is the case, though men rack their very brains to invent falsehoods, and then waft them upon every breeze, to the contrary notwithstanding.

I have now given sufficient on the subject of the hill Cumerab—it has a singular and imposing appearance for that country, and must excite the curious enquiry of every lover of the book of Mormon: though I hope never like Jerusalem, and the sepulchre of our Lord, the pilgrims. In my estimation, certain places are dearer to me for what they *now* contain than for what they *have* contained. For the satisfaction of such as believe I have been thus particular, and to avoid the question being a thousand times asked, more than any other cause, shall proceed and be as particular as heretofore. The manner in which the plates were deposited:

First, a hole of sufficient depth, (how deep I know not,) was dug. At the bottom of this was laid a stone of suitable size, the upper surface being smooth. At each edge was placed a large quantity of cement, and into this cement, at the four edges of this stone were placed, erect, four others, *their* bottom edges resting in the cement at the outer edges of the first stone. The four last named, when placed erect, formed a box, the corners, or where the edges of the four came in contact, were also cemented so firmly that the moisture from without was prevented from entering. It is to be observed, also, that the inner surface of the four erect, or side stones was smooth. This box was sufficiently large to admit a breast-plate, such as was used by the ancients to defend the chest, &c. from the arrows and weapons of their enemy. From the bottom of the box, or from the breast-plate, arose three small pillars composed of the same description of cement used on the edges; and upon these three pillars was placed the record of the children of Joseph, and of a people who left the tower far, far before the days of Joseph, or a sketch of each, which had it not been for this, and the never failing goodness of God, *we* might have perished in our sins, having been left to bow down before the altars of the Gentiles and to have paid homage to the priests of Baal! I must not forget to say that this box, containing the record was covered with another stone, the bottom surface being flat and the upper, crowning. But those three pillars were not so lengthy as to cause the plates and the crowning stone to come in contact. I have now given you, according to my promise, the manner in which this record was deposited; though when it was first visited by our brother, in 1823, a part of the crowning stone was visible above the surface while the edges were concealed by the soil and grass, from which circumstance you will see, that however deep this box might have been placed by Moroni at first, the time had been sufficient to wear

the earth so that it was easily discovered, when once directed, and yet not enough to make a *perceptible* difference to the passer by. So wonderful are the works of the Almighty, and so far from our finding out are his ways, that one who trembles to take his holy name into his lips, is left to wonder at his exact providences, and the fulfilment of his purposes in the event of times and seasons. A few years sooner might have found even the top stone concealed, and discouraged our brother from attempting to make a further trial to obtain this rich treasure, for fear of discovery; and a few later might have left the small box uncovered, and exposed its valuable contents to the rude calculations and vain speculations of those who neither understand common language nor fear God. But such would have been contrary to the words of the ancients and the promises made to them: and this is why I am left to admire the works and see the wisdom in the designs of the Lord in all things manifested to the eyes of the world: they show that all human inventions are like vapours, while his word endures forever and his promises to the last generation.

Having thus digressed from my main subject to give a few items for the special benefit of all, it will be necessary to return, and proceed as formerly. And if any suppose I have indulged too freely in reflections, I will only say, that it is my opinion, were one to have a view of the glory of God which is to cover Israel in the last days, and know that these, though they may be thought small things, were the beginning to effect the same, they would be at a loss where to close, should they give a moment's vent to the imaginations of the heart.

You will have wondered, perhaps, that the mind of our brother should be so occupied with the thoughts of the goods of this world, at the time of arriving at Cumorah, on the morning of the 22nd of September, 1823, after having been wrapt in the visions of heaven during the night, and also seeing and hearing in open day; but the mind of man is easily turned, if it is not held by the power of God through the prayer of faith, and you will remember that I have said that two invisible powers were operating upon his mind during his walk from his residence to Cumorah, and that the one urging the certainty of wealth and ease in this life, had so powerfully wrought upon him that the great object so carefully and impressively named by the angel, had entirely gone from his recollection that only a fixed determination to obtain now urged him forward. In this, which occasioned a failure to obtain, at that time, the record, do not understand me to attach blame to our brother: he was young, and his mind easily turned from correct principles, unless he could be favoured with a certain round of experience. And yet, while young, untraditionated and untaught in the systems of the world, he was in a situation to be lead into the great work of God, and be qualified to perform it in due time.

After arriving at the repository, a little exertion in removing the

soil from the edges of the top of the box, and a light pry, brought to his natural vision its contents. No sooner did he behold this sacred treasure than his hopes were renewed, and he supposed his success certain; and without first attempting to take it from its long place of deposit, he thought, perhaps, there might be something more, equally as valuable, and to take only the plates, might give others an opportunity of obtaining the remainder, which could he secure, would still add to his store of wealth. These, in short, were his reflections, without once thinking of the solemn instruction of the heavenly messenger, that all must be done with an express view of glorifying God.

On attempting to take possession of the record a shock was produced upon his system, by an invisible power, which deprived him, in a measure, of his natural strength. He desisted for an instant, and then made another attempt, but was more sensibly shocked than before. What was the occasion of this he knew not—*there* was the pure unsullied record, as had been described—he had heard of the power of enchantment, and a thousand like stories, which held the hidden treasures of the earth, and supposed that physical exertion and personal strength was only necessary to enable him to yet obtain the object of his wish. He therefore made the third attempt with an increased exertion, when his strength failed him more than at either of the former times, and without premeditating he exclaimed, "Why can I not obtain this book?" "Because you have not kept the commandments of the Lord," answered a voice, within a seeming short distance. He looked and to his astonishment, there stood the angel who had previously given him the directions concerning this matter. In an instant, all the former instructions, the great intelligence concerning Israel and the last days, were brought to his mind: he thought of the time when his heart was fervently engaged in prayer to the Lord, when his spirit was contrite, and when his holy messenger from the skies unfolded the wonderful things connected with this record. He had come, to be sure, and found the word of the angel fulfilled concerning the reality of the record, but he had failed to remember the great end for which they had been kept, and in consequence could not have power to take them into his possession and bear them away.

At that instant he looked to the Lord in prayer, and as he prayed darkness began to disperse from his mind and his soul was lit up as it was the evening before and he was filled with the Holy Spirit; and again did the Lord manifest his condescension and mercy: the heavens were opened and the glory of the Lord shone around about and rested upon him. While he thus stood gazing and admiring, the angel said, "Look!" and as he thus spake he beheld the prince of darkness, surrounded by his innumerable train of associates. All this passed before him, and the heavenly messenger said, "All this is shown, the good and the evil, the holy and impure, the glory of God and the power of darkness, that you may know hereafter the two powers and



never be influenced or overcome by that wicked one. Behold, whatever entices and leads to good and to do good, is of God, and whatever does not is of that wicked one: It is he that fills the hearts of men with evil, to walk in darkness and blaspheme God; and you may learn from henceforth, that his ways are to destruction, but the way of holiness is peace and rest. You now see why you could not obtain this record; that the commandment was strict, and that if ever these sacred things are obtained they must be by prayer and faithfulness in obeying the Lord. They are not deposited here for the sake of accumulating gain and wealth for the glory of this world: they were sealed by the prayer of faith, and because of the knowledge which they contain they are of no worth among the children of men, only for their knowledge. On them is contained the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it was given to his people on this land, and when it shall be brought forth by the power of God it shall be carried to the Gentiles, of whom many will receive it, and after will the seed of Israel be brought into the fold of their Redeemer by obeying it also. Those who kept the commandments of the Lord on this land, desired this at his hand, and through the prayer of faith obtained the promise, that if their descendants should transgress and fall away, that a record might be kept and in the last days come to their children. These things are sacred, and must be kept so, for the promise of the Lord concerning them, must be fulfilled. No man can obtain them if his heart is impure, because they contain that which is sacred; and besides, should they be entrusted in unholy hands the knowledge could not come to the world, because they cannot be interpreted by the learning of this generation; consequently, they would be considered of no worth, only as precious metal. Therefore, remember, that they are to be translated by the gift and power of God. By them will the Lord work a great and a marvelous work: the wisdom of the wise shall become as naught, and the understanding of the prudent shall be hid, and because the power of God shall be displayed those who profess to know the truth but walk in deceit, shall tremble with anger; but with signs and with wonders, with gifts and with healings, with the manifestations of the power of God, and with the Holy Ghost, shall the hearts of the faithful be comforted. You have now beheld the power of God manifested and the power of satan: you see that there is nothing that is desirable in the works of darkness; that they cannot bring happiness; that those who are overcome therewith are miserable, while on the other hand the righteous are blessed with a place in the kingdom of God where joy unspeakable surrounds them. There they rest beyond the power of the enemy of truth, where no evil can disturb them. The glory of God crowns them, and they continually feast upon his goodness and enjoy his smiles. Behold, notwithstanding you have seen this great display of power, by which you may ever be able to detect the evil one, yet I give unto you another sign, and when it comes to pass then know that the Lord is God and that he will fulfil his purposes, and that the knowledge which this record contains will go to every nation, and

kindred, and tongue, and people under the whole heaven. This is the sign: When these things begin to be known, that is, when it is known that the Lord has shown you these things, the workers of iniquity will seek your overthrow: they will circulate falsehoods to destroy your reputation, and also will seek to take your life; but remember this if you are faithful, and shall hereafter continue to keep the commandments of the Lord, you shall be preserved to bring these things forth; for in due time he will again give you a commandment to come and take them. When they are interpreted the Lord will give the holy priesthood to some, and they shall begin to proclaim this Gospel and baptize by water, and after that they shall have power to give the Holy Ghost by the laying on of their hands. Then will persecution rage more and more; for the iniquities of men shall be revealed, and those who are not built upon the Rock will seek to overthrow this Church; but it will increase the more opposed, and spread farther and farther, increasing in knowledge till they shall be sanctified and receive an inheritance where the glory of God will rest upon them; and when this takes place, and all things are prepared, the ten tribes of Israel will be revealed in the north country, whither they have been for a long season; and when this is fulfilled will be brought to pass that saying of the prophet—"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord." But, notwithstanding the workers of iniquity shall seek your destruction the arm of the Lord will be extended and you will be borne off conqueror, if you keep all his commandments. Your name shall be known among the nations, for the work which the Lord will perform by your hands shall cause the righteous to rejoice and the wicked to rage: with the one it shall be had in honour, and with the other in reproach; yet, with these it shall be a terror because of the great and marvelous work which shall follow the coming forth of this fulness of the gospel. Now, go thy way, remembering what the Lord has done for thee, and be diligent in keeping his commandments, and he will deliver thee from temptations and all the arts and devices of the wicked one. Forget not to pray, that thy mind may become strong that when he shall manifest unto thee, thou mayest have power to escape the evil, and obtain these precious things."

Though I am unable to paint before the mind, a perfect description of the scenery which passed before our brother, I think I have said enough to give you a field for reflection which may not be unprofitable. You see the great wisdom in God in leading him thus far, that his mind might begin to be more matured, and thereby be able to judge correctly, the spirits. I do not say that he would not have obtained the record had he went according to the direction of the angel—I say that he would; but God knowing all things from the beginning, began thus to instruct his servant. And in this it is plainly to be seen that the adversary of truth is not sufficient to overthrow the work of God: You will remember that I said, two invisible powers were operating upon the mind of our brother while going to Cumorah. In

this, then, I discover wisdom in the dealings of the Lord: it was impossible for any man to translate the book of Mormon by the gift of God, endure the afflictions, and temptations, and devices of satan, without being overthrown, unless he had been previously benefitted with a certain round of experience: and had our brother obtained the record the first time, not knowing how to detect the works of darkness, he might have been deprived of the blessing of sending forth the word of truth to this generation. Therefore, God knowing that satan would thus lead his mind astray, began at that early hour, that when the full time should arrive, he might have a servant prepared to fulfil his purpose. So, however afflicting to his feelings this repulse might have been, he had reason to rejoice before the Lord and be thankful for the favours and mercies shown: that whatever other instruction was necessary to the accomplishing this great work, he had learned, by experience, how to discern between the spirit of Christ and the spirit of the devil.

From this time to September, 1827, few occurrences worthy of note, transpired. As a fact to be expected, nothing of importance could be recorded concerning a generation in darkness. In the mean time our brother of whom I have been speaking, passed the time as others, in labouring for his support. But in consequence of certain false and slanderous reports which have been circulated, justice would require me to say something upon the private life of one whose character has been so shamefully traduced. By some he is said to have been a lazy, idle, vicious, profligate fellow. These I am prepared to contradict, and that too by the testimony of *many* persons with whom I have been intimately acquainted, and know to be individuals of the strictest veracity, and unquestionable integrity. All these strictly and virtually agree in saying, that he was an honest, upright, virtuous, and faithfully industrious young man. And those who say to the contrary can be influenced by no other motive than to destroy the reputation of one who never injured any man in either property or person.

While young, I have been informed he was afflicted with sickness; but I have been told by those for whom he has laboured, that he was a young man of truth and industrious habits. And I will add further that it is my conviction, if he never had been called to the exalted station in which he now occupies, he might have passed down the stream of time with ease and in respectability, without the foul and hellish tongue of slander ever being employed against him. It is no more than to be expected, I admit, that men of corrupt hearts will try to traduce his character and put a spot upon his name: indeed, this is according to the word of the angel; but this does not prohibit me from speaking freely of his merits, and contradicting those falsehoods—I feel myself bound so to do, and I know that my testimony, on this matter, will be received and believed while those who testify to the contrary are crumbled to dust, and their words swept away in the general mass of lies when God shall purify the earth!

Connected with this is the character of the family: and on this I say as I said concerning the character of our brother—I feel myself



bound to defend the innocent always when opportunity offers. Had not those who are notorious for lies and dishonesty, also assailed the character of the family I should pass over them here in silence; but now I shall not forbear. It has been industriously circulated that they were dishonest, deceitful and vile. On this I have the testimony of responsible persons, who have said and will say, that this is basely false; and besides, a personal acquaintance for seven years, has demonstrated that all the difficulty is, they were once poor, (yet industrious,) and have now, by the help of God, arisen to note, and their names are like to, (indeed they will,) be handed down to posterity, and had among the righteous. They are industrious, honest, virtuous and liberal to all. This is their character; and though many take advantage of their liberality, God will reward *them*; but this is the fact, and this testimony shall shine upon the records of the saints, and be recorded on the archives of heaven to be read in the day of eternity, when the wicked and perverse, who have vilely slandered them without cause or provocation, reap their reward with the unjust, where there is weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth!—if they do not repent.

Soon after this visit to Cumorah, a gentleman from the south part of the State, (Chenango County,) employed our brother as a common labourer, and accordingly he visited that section of the country; and had he not been accused of digging down all, or nearly so, the mountains of Susquehanna, or causing others to do it by some art of necromancy, I should leave this for the present, unnoticed. You will remember, in the mean time, that those who seek to vilify his character, say that he has always been notorious for his idleness. This gentleman, whose name is Stowel, resided in the town of Bainbridge, on or near the head waters of the Susquehanna river. Some forty miles south, or down the river, in the town of Harmony, Susquehanna County, Pa. is said to be a cave or subterraneous recess, whether entirely formed by art or not I am uninformed neither does this matter; but such is said to be the case,—where a company of Spaniards, a long time since, when the country was uninhabited by white settlers, excavated from the bowels of the earth ore, and coined a large quantity of money; after which they secured the cavity and evacuated, leaving a part still in the cave, purposing to return at some distant period. A long time elapsed and this account came from one of the individuals who was first engaged in this mining business. The country was pointed out and the spot minutely described. This, I believe, is the substance, so far as my memory serves, though I shall not pledge my veracity for the correctness of the account as I have given. Enough however, was credited of the Spaniard's story, to excite the belief of many that there was a fine sum of the precious metal lying coined in this subterraneous vault, among whom was the employer; and accordingly our brother was required to spend a few months with some others in excavating the earth in pursuit of this treasure.

While employed here he became acquainted with the family of

Isaac Hale, of whom you read in several of the productions of those who have sought to destroy the validity of the book of Mormon. It may be necessary hereafter, to refer you more particularly to the conduct of this family, as their influence has been considerably exerted to destroy the reputation of our brother, probably because he married a daughter of the same, contrary to some of their wishes, and in connection with this, to certain statements of some others of the inhabitants of that section of country. But in saying this I do not wish to be understood as uttering aught against Mrs. Smith, (formerly Emma Hale.) She has most certainly evinced a decidedly correct mind and uncommon ability of talent and judgment, in a manifest willingness to fulfill, on her part that passage in sacred writ,—“and they twain shall be one flesh”—by accompanying her husband against the wishes and advice of her relatives, to a land of strangers: and however I may deprecate their actions, can say in justice, *her* character stands as fair for morality, piety and virtue, as any in the world. Though you may say, this is a digression from the subject proposed, I trust I shall be indulged, for the purpose of satisfying many, who have heard so many slanderous reports that they are lead to believe them true because they are not contradicted; and besides, *this* generation are determined to oppose every item in the form or under the pretence of revelation, unless it comes through a man who has always been more pure than Michael the great prince; and as this is the fact, and my opposers have put me to the necessity, I shall be more prolix, and have no doubt, before I give up the point, shall prove to your satisfaction, and to that of every man, that the translator of the book of Mormon is worthy the appellation of a seer and a prophet of the Lord. In this I do not pretend that he is not a man subject to passion like other men, beset with infirmities and encompassed with weaknesses; but if he is, all men were so before him and a pretence to the contrary would argue a more than mortal which would at once destroy the whole system of the religion of the Lord Jesus; for he anciently chose the weak to overcome the strong, the foolish to confound the wise, (I mean considered so by this world,) and by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe.

On the private character of our brother I need add nothing further, at present, previous to his obtaining the records of the Nephites, only that while in that country, some very officious person complained of him as a disorderly person, and brought him before the authorities of the county; but there being no cause of action he was honourably acquitted. From this time forward he continued to receive instructions concerning the coming forth of the fulness of the gospel, from the mouth of the heavenly messenger, until he was directed to visit again the place where the record was deposited.

For the present I close, with a thankful heart that I am permitted to see thousands rejoicing in the assurance of the promises of the Lord confirmed unto them though the obedience of the everlasting covenant.

As ever your brother in the Lord Jesus.